

POEMS OF  
PERSONALITY  
THIRD SERIES

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REGINALD C. ROBBINS





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THIRD SERIES



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OF  
PERSONALITY

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REGINALD C. ROBBINS



— “*to speak beyond the book*”

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## HOMER

THE mighty morning wakes! Earth, heaven and  
ocean

Leap to the touch of sweet, swift-footed light  
Adown yon orient atmosphere dawn-dancing,  
Quick-shafted from the Asian mountain-ridge  
Distant upon the lordly continent!

And this green isle with cliffs surf-circled standeth,  
A gem amid the many-murmuring waters,

White-ring'd with the wine-wonder of the sea.

And ever 'twixt mine isle and that far shore  
The shimmering wind-rows of the wave advancing

Come gleaming onward at a wide approach,

Feeding the eye of the mind with impulse urgent  
(Out of the new-born day and fountain'd Ida,

Out of the swift-oncoming air and ocean

Or hither-streaming, sweet, quick-footed light)

To sing to-day once more, as many a day

I sang; as none before mine hour have sung-it

In palace or in herdsman's hut, in ship

On ocean beaten or the rocky place

Of some high altar mountainward; to sing

The strife of men and gods (sith gods impel

## POEMS OF PERSONALITY

And alway shall impel the light of morning,  
The sweep of the air and ocean's foamy rage  
Storm-stricken), to sing of ancient, mighty men  
Like ocean, air and earth high-powerful  
Yet in a strife the gods had stirr'd them to  
Shatter'd and suffering, wasted through the years  
(Unless in suffering be best herohood!)  
Like as a day were wasted when no song  
Issues from lips upon the promontory  
Nor pæan at the dawn-tide poureth on  
The hurrying impulse wine-hued of the wave!  
For, many a year, told I the tale of Troia  
And of the hero-wanderer seeking home  
Against Poseidon, Troia being destroy'd,  
In Chios singing who was youthful then  
And hale, but now (an aged man white-hair'd)  
Feel, by the morning-wind in northern Lesbos,  
The singing-hour upon me once again! —  
Thou, Zeus, hast felt as when Homeros singeth:  
When from thy front full-arm'd Athene sprang  
(Goddess of couraged foresight to the strife)  
Perchance at morning, when the silver shafts  
Of Phoibos through thine high Olympian hall  
Woke thee to rapture and thou borest her!

## HOMER

O Zeus, in imitation of thy glory  
The dawn hath call'd me to create for men  
In mine old-age as in mine hours of youth  
A music of the elements, a splendor  
Of song-burst to be flung o'er world awide  
In voice of the bard chanting the woven tale —  
New combats and new triumphs and new woes  
Which men may sing mix'd with the former chants  
Nor guess thereby the maker were grown old!  
And, though the fate be dire as is the strife  
Through the long day and unto Hades' end,  
Yet all is of the morning in my mind  
(However agèd be the race of men)  
Singing the hero-working though we die!  
Doubtless there shall be songs of evening heard;  
And songs of noon-tide when the heavier blue  
Broods o'er an ocean swooning in the sun  
Heedless of gods or men or hero-strife,  
Calm, harmless as a tether'd sacrifice —  
And they be otherwise than Asia's now  
Of blaze and starting forth to the day's fate.  
And doubtless may bewilderment ensue  
To men not born of morning, wondering then  
How that Homeros sang as then they'd sing not;

## POEMS OF PERSONALITY

And, finding in Homeros not their own  
Noon-moveless ocean of the heedless gleam  
Nor terrors troublous of an evening eye,  
Shall blame and call me blind! But am I blind,  
O Zeus, who stand upon my promontory  
In Lesbos near to Troas (where I came  
Yearning from Chios for the winds of Ida)  
With open'd lips and couraged, steadfast gaze  
Ever to eastward at the opening day  
Taking thine instigation; whilst from Ida  
That looks upon the Trojan northward plain,  
Skamandros' flood and shores where heroes fell  
Sweeps ever over the wine-faced, rustling sea  
Coming and coming as in foam-row borne  
The wind of inspiration, thine Athene  
(Foresighted to the tumult of the strife,  
Sustaining in the hero each resource)  
Who gives the impulse to the mounting mind  
And makes in me the morning yet of men?  
Nay, Zeus; nor are they blind who follow after  
With music of a lyre though earth be old,  
Old; and the race of men white-hair'd as I!  
Not blind are they who, though the noon be dull'd  
With hot oppression or the pallid glare

## HOMER

Of Hades-ominous clouds black-piled along  
The margin of a westward ocean bode  
A night too starless, find within the mind  
Still thine Athene, still a morning-strength  
Than mine the loftier that it singeth yet  
Though days and years of element are pass'd  
And Troia be forgotten with my name;  
And men no more be striving. Yea, O Zeus,  
Though all were heedless of thee, or all despair'd  
Thine orient turning, never shouldst thou fail  
At last (the appointed dawn-tide hour at hand)  
In wind of inspiration, thine Athene,  
As now to urge upon their voicelessness  
A song from out the spirit; which, suffering,  
Yet striveth herowise; which seeth earth  
As no earth were without thee — though the eye  
Be sightless, sightless: even as mine own!

## JOB

Nor by the Voice shall I be overcome,  
Not by the overbearingness of God  
Subdued; where power, domineering still,  
Disdains all justice! Shall I be reduced  
(And after endurance of such manifold,  
Unmerited agonies!) by mere rebuke  
In bluster of the tempest, to succumb  
In spirit as in body — and be dust,  
No longer questioning, no longer Man?  
I grant the ways of the Lord, inscrutable!  
I grant the injustice, not to be explain'd!  
Yet will not acquiesce and turn for Him  
A minister of monstrous wantonness  
Unstirr'd of nobler promptings. God or Man,  
I still must choose between them and elect  
(Ah! even the dust but would be questioning!)  
The juster, though mine agony abide  
Fourfold the vengeance of the unjust Judge,  
'Soever mighty to devour me up  
With wrath and whirlwind: who His wrath insult!  
Ah, Lord! not thus shalt Thou o'erpower the man  
By taunt and boasting, though Behemoth too

## JOB

(However halfway mighty up to Thee!)  
Moan and Leviathan beweep Thy strength!  
If with Behemoth and Leviathan  
I suffer, so my steadfast sympathy  
For sufferance tormented of Thy hand  
Doubly defies Thee for the brotherhood!  
Lo! dost Thou spur the Horse to rush on spears,  
Put madness in his nostrils at the sound  
Of trumpet and by battle him destroy,  
Him and the captains trusting in his might —  
And Thine to aid the righteous, nor betray?  
Lo! the Gazel upon the sparsest weed  
Thou starvest, that beneath the fire at last  
Of desert drouth her fever may be flame  
And that same speed, Thou gavest her to keep her,  
Wither and waste before the javelin?  
Behemoth also he at last must fall  
Alone, beyond the help of any arm  
Than Thine — and dost Thou save him with Thy  
strength?  
Or dost Thou watch him all-unpityingly  
Gasp out the great gasps, or Leviathan  
Drown in the flood that Thou hadst made for him:  
Drown and be carcass rotted on the strand

## POEMS OF PERSONALITY

To heaven high-stinking, when one turn or touch  
Of Thy least finger had sustainèd him?  
Jehovah! Thou hast against Thee many a charge  
Of heaviest obloquy: Who may'st, but will'st not;  
Who canst all things for good yet workest ill!  
And by the Voice of One all-powerful  
But all-unjust shall I be overcome?

Ah, God! to force me thus into defiance  
Most miserable to the meekness of me:  
The worst if last of Thine injustices,  
Because preventing me from reverence  
As Thou from pity long hast been absolved;  
Goad ing me from my posture of a patience  
Submissive still if questioning! That now  
From any more injustice I escape  
(And with me Thy creation, Beast and Man!)  
By rising up in judgment: I, at worst,  
A judge over my Maker, face to face!

I tell Thee, Lord! 't is Thou Who must be judged,  
If I am but Thine image, face to face,  
So capable of judgment even as Thou!  
I tell Thee, God! that I will be Thy judge —

## JOB

Yet justly, very justly, lest Thy fault  
Repeat in me Thy creature. For Thy fault  
Is very grievous as I know Thee now  
Convicted out of Thine own voice and boast  
Of fashioning a world in wantonness.  
Thou might'st have pleaded of some power above  
Thee  
Thwarting Thy will for well; Thou might'st have  
shown me  
Some compensation to my misery  
By justice otherwhere through my great wrong.  
Thou pleadedst not, but boastedst of these things. —  
I grant Thy ways were erst inscrutable  
Anent injustice plainly to be known:  
The injustice proven, not to be explain'd.  
Nor now might Thine injustice be explain'd  
In this its worst compulsion to revolt —  
Unless, unless high humanhood compell'd  
Of Thy misdeed, Man's scrupulosity  
In fear of imaging his Maker's fault,  
This better-than-mere-justice speaking now  
Be Thy supreme achievement, pardoning all  
The dire arraignment drawn of Thine own lips?  
For, God! I even in my misery here

## POEMS OF PERSONALITY

Grieve for Behemoth and Leviathan,  
For Horse and Doe (not to discourse of pains  
On other men inflicted; nor of Thee  
To pity Thine injustice!); I in pain  
Unspeakable yet speak at risk of life  
(A life how gladly render'd up to Thee;  
Save for this zeal, first to defend Thy fame  
By seeking explanation of my woe  
Against false explanation of the Friends,  
And now to acquit Thee in Thine own despite!),  
Yet argue, at the risk of death, with Thee  
The Omnipotent in Evil, but to prove  
Thy world, if half-unwittingly to Thee,  
A work of splendor, that Thy morning-stars  
Which sang together sang not wantonly!  
How were it, Lord! that Thou couldst make such  
men

As judge Thee not ungenerously, though  
They suffer with the anguish of thine earth?  
Perchance Thou feelest too the fate of all;  
And pitiest, deserving so my pity,  
Most poignantly because Thou madest them  
To bear with Thee in patience more-than-just,  
To judge of Thee in generosity;

## JOB

And knowest the glory of Thy handiwork:  
Thyself almost as Man, to glory in it?  
What were my vindication beyond death,  
Which could not reach Thee as the Lord of Life,  
To this that vindicateth Thee by me? —  
Speak to me, Thou! declare Thou unto me,  
If that the secret of the universe  
Be Thine; and mine but counsel without knowledge!  
Art Thou now silent, whilst upon my tongue  
Trembles the explanation of Thy ways  
Their problem and perplexity to man:  
The way of pity, that Thou madest us,  
And feelest with the creatures Thou hast made  
The pangs of Thine injustice and the glory  
Of human generosity to Thee  
(Proving of Thee Thy wise creatorship,  
The saving immolation of Thy pride!)  
Beyond all meekness, as I judge Thee now?

Lord! for Thy silence, I submit to Thee!

## ISAIAH

IN God's sight and in man's the chastisement  
Of Ephraim beneath the conqueror's yoke  
Is just; fulfilment of a prophesying  
Long spoken, openly the hand of God:  
That Ephraim sweats and groans with ox and ass,  
Doing hard labor in an alien land  
As erst in Egypt. Yea, the doom is just.  
For Ephraim, was she not idolatrous,  
Allied with Syria and Damascus' gods  
(Whether the idols be Jehovah call'd  
Or Baal what heed, when God is not of stone?)  
A nation of backsliders; save a few  
Who, fiery-tongued and of the lips of God  
Inspired, spake for Him over overtly  
(Hosea, Amos and the mightier twain)  
Denouncing idols, Asshur equally  
With Baal though Jehovah's instrument  
Be Asshur to Samaria's overthrow?  
And, where the warning of the prophet-tongues  
Against reliance on the heathen strength  
Of Baal, Syria and Damascus' cult  
Was no more heeded than the twitter of birds;

## ISAIAH

And idol-priests within, without the land,  
In Ephraim as in Syria, mock'd the more;  
There shall not vast Assyrian hosts destroy  
And rape into an exile righteously  
The people, so to purge by fire and spear  
The unclean high-places? And, though here and  
yon

Be one or two fair sheaves amid the tares  
Enmesh'd in field-wide ruin, shall not God  
By riddance root and branch prepare the ground  
Best for repentance and the remnant-growth  
If any shall remain in His good time?

Ah, Judah! Judah! have I not said Woe!  
Woe! unto Ephraim with terrible speech  
Of chastisement impending — and when now  
Their punishment approveth prophecy  
And mine appointment from Jehovah stands  
Before the tribes made plain, shall I, in this  
Mine hour of vindication from the taunts  
(From Ephraim or from Judah snarling out  
In fierce refusal to allow the truth  
For fear of doom or horror at the fate),  
In mine exoneration from the taunts

## POEMS OF PERSONALITY

Of prosperous unrighteousness, deplore  
The glory of the justice of our God?  
Their doom is just; and God is on my side  
Against the scoffers — and shall I denounce  
Mine inspiration and repent of God?  
Ah, God! could not Thy power have forced Thy  
folk,  
Those children of the covenant, to care  
For Thee and for Thy warning nor compel  
The realization of such prophecies?  
Ah, God! could not Thy servant, even I,  
Have suffer'd, as a scapegoat unto Thee,  
For every sin of Ephraim; that they  
Thy flock, my brethren still for all their fault,  
Had turn'd unto repentance — and bewray'd  
My speech, mine insight and my service for Thee  
By sheer anticipation, spoiling all  
Of warning by the punishment forestall'd?  
God, I would vouch to Thee, even I, Thy clay,  
Would vouch to Thee for Ephraim, wouldest Thou  
But cancel inspiration, leave me proved  
Blasphemer — if but yon Assyrian host  
Were from the waste-lands of Samaria  
And from their fastnesses to north and east

## ISAIAH

Cast out; and Ephraim in prosperity  
Return'd and once more vineyarded of home!  
Behold! if but some fear Thou hadst vouchsafed  
Unto their souls (not anger at my words!)  
That, Syrian Damascus left alone  
To overthrow by those Assyrian hosts,  
Scorning a dalliance with the heathen gods  
Their feet had turn'd unto Thy righteousness  
And so been saved by my false prophesying!

Ah! then had I been more Thy prophet, more  
(Though in disgrace) the worker in Thy field;  
Then, then, by the spectacle of downfall yielden  
(It dawns upon me I should serve Thee so  
More than by confirmation of Thy pledge!)  
For every high intent within my spirit,  
An evidence of God-nobility  
Beyond mere mult and wage, example to them  
(Dread Lord! example haply too to Thee!)  
Of best desert precluded from reward,  
Of loftiest merit openly denied  
And Thy world-power frustrate seemingly —  
Nay, frustrate, O Jehovah, veritably —  
Unless a loftier than justice rule

## POEMS OF PERSONALITY

Thy world and generosity have shape  
Within Thy heart and will, as in mine own  
The generosity of huge regret  
Hath birth beside my triumph. Ah, for Judah,  
Where yet the Assyrian conqueror abstains,  
Be generous, God! oh, wreak on me Thy wrath  
If by mine uttermost discrediting  
Thy meting-out of judgment be forsworn  
To nobler purposes, to leading-on  
Not by the chastisement but, as in me  
By opening of the bowels of compassion,  
The travails of a sympathy with Thee  
In Thy new part of Healer, saviorhood  
Which needeth not the surfeit-hemorrhage  
To force the fruit of pity purgative!  
O great Jehovah! wreck but my career,  
Destroy this prophet-reputation with  
The basis of the justice-prophesying  
(For generosity can none foretell!);  
Purge and prevent Thy people ere the fact  
Of God-establishment by ruin of them!  
For am not I, Thy servant, one alone,  
A prophet crying in the wilderness;  
And are not they, Thy people, many thousands;

## ISAIAH

And wert not Thou, O Lord, the greater God  
For dwelling in the heart and soul and strength  
Of thousands glad at home (a fellowship  
Of prophets as the heart shall speak for Thee  
In confidence beyond the need of foresight!),  
Of thousands Thine for love; not in the fear —  
The hate — of a poor people laboring  
(Some remnant of them) in a stranger-land  
With ox and ass beneath the burden of  
A conqueror who knoweth not Thy name?  
And I, Thy servant, if Thou anywise  
Troublest at my discredit and disgrace,  
Comfort Thyself that I shall ever praise Thee,  
Praising Thee but the more should justice fail  
And generosity in Thee awake  
To my destruction. As Samaria now  
In this her ruin'd silence privily  
Should I endure it, nor disturb Thy peace  
With any lamentation. For the truth  
That I the last, and no man after me,  
Should perish of Thy justice, such a truth  
(Thou wouldest allow the foresight finally!)  
Though I be sawn asunder in Thy courts  
(And, shouldst but Thou present the paradigm,

## POEMS OF PERSONALITY

Then in Thine image might men pardon me) —  
The sense of such a truth as man's salvation  
And spirit-softening at Thy forgiveness  
Would lift my spirit to the mountain-tops  
Vocal above the valleys with Thy feet!

## DEMOCRITUS

LIKE as the myriad atoms of the sands  
So small, so tough that nought may cut nor crush  
Nor anywise effect diminishment  
In any of them — like the desert sands  
Here of Aigyptos 'neath my wandering feet  
(These grains in curious shapes indeed diverse)  
Lieth the first material of the world,  
The substance of the prime necessity,  
As though in this hot sunshine wide and whole  
Declared, to reasonings illuminate.  
Of myriad truths composed the substance holdeth;  
Things real; alone in primal shape unlike;  
And in such sorts unlike — as primal shape,  
Affording to sense and so to human act  
Derivative reality indeed,  
Doubtless may gender of the impact of them  
(Which sensuous characters Protagoras,  
Though scarce Leukippos, hath provided for!) —  
As can, for seeming to a human sense,  
By doubtful parlance of the modern mood  
Be added of the mind. Though ultimately  
(Leukippos, scarce Protagoras, in this!)

## POEMS OF PERSONALITY

Are the atoms, so I deem them, as they are  
(The shaping first assumed) so wholly like  
In kind each unto each that utmost search  
(Like mine upon the face of the desert here)  
Might nowise set apart as other-sorted  
One grain of the world from other — ay, save in size,  
Itself from absolute form derivative:  
As desert sands, though each as each too small  
For diminution, yet are size-unlike,  
Some smaller and some larger in themselves.  
That thus in size and weight (derivative  
From primal form, I know) may difference be  
Real, towärd our purposes of thought  
To be relied upon as given to it  
(Though reasonable; yet alogical,  
Not sensuous-added of the mind!), among  
Things utterly substantial each from each.

Nor need we any other truths assumed  
Than these of atomism, the tough, the small,  
The several indeed of shape and size  
But otherwise an homogeneousness.  
For all beside is sensuously derived,  
Logic-related, added of the mind

## DEMOCRITUS

As 't were, and therefore not approvable;  
Ay, therefore not thus for first philosophy!  
Ah, here as I stand upon the desert plains  
I thus define their full reality,  
Sands, sands and sands, beneath diminishment  
Or multiplication; myriads, each too small  
And all too many for intrinsic change;  
And therefore, though no All of Elea,  
Yet nothing like the Dream of Ephesos!  
The shimmering of the sun-fire well may seem  
Sand-alteration; or the desert air  
May hang in the margin of the open heavens  
Tall palms and glimmering pools of phantasy.  
But these no more than falsehoods of the tongue  
Are for the physic-search of human wisdom  
A reasonable substance. At my feet  
Lie sands and sands, a multiplicity  
(Declared to reasoning of the high sunshine)  
Unwavering save to figment of the sense,  
And yet, unlike the All of Elea,  
Substantial, not in virtue overall  
Of vague enlargement unto boundlessness,  
But rather because thus utterly minute  
In every element-identity;

## POEMS OF PERSONALITY

Sands, sands, in truth; a waste as but by naming  
(Beware the stagnant void of Elea!),  
No stagnant void, but capable, each grain,  
If scarce of an ultimate alterance to sense  
Yet, in a truth ulterior to sense,  
Of motion; ay, not, as sang Parmenides,  
A very palm-hung pool of phantasy,  
A glimmering merely, but, itself instinct  
With potency and the making of the worlds;  
A source-of-all-sensation veritable,  
A matrix to the modelling of mind,  
Not unrelated to the acts of men.

Yet one thing more! Behold the acts of men  
(Which for Parmenides were mystery;  
Yea, for Leukippos, dubiously described  
Without or source or service veritable)  
Themselves, as shown us of Protagoras  
If not of Herakleitos, motionwise —  
And thus derivatively of the Real —  
Resembling any act mechanical  
Whether of sand or atom! I may walk  
Foot-firm upon these granules. I may stoop  
And lift, in the hand, of them a multitude

## DEMOCRITUS

Sifting the desert-substance myriadwise,  
To winnow them high-held above mine head  
Like seed from chaff. And like to chaff or seed  
Sandward upon the plain the sands pour down  
In never-ceasing impulse, every speck  
Seeking intent its fellows. Yet isolate  
Each falleth, some the swiftlier for their size;  
Some softlier, widely streaming on the breeze  
Dust-fashion: yet fitless either, whilst between them  
The interstice, the vacuum obtains  
Without which motion were not. For were world  
Pack'd tight and full-composed and fitted well,  
How were a cosmos but a merest grain,  
Incapable of compressions, yielding not  
To severations, and internally  
Like to the desert-floor too still-compact,  
Inertive! Whence, betwixt the grains of the world  
Be equal-myriad holes permitting motion  
Though real! And my motion or their own  
Alike is thuswise valent, as I deem,  
By dint of the vacuum, such aperture  
Betwixt the atoms of the primal mode  
Permitting the translation. Might my feet  
Pursue and press-upon the firm-pack'd path

## POEMS OF PERSONALITY

Further and further from the valley-green  
(Where sense-affection so confuseth truth!)  
Of Neilos and along the drifted edge  
Of these sand-billows (bare of feeling-claim,  
So reason-fostering!), save there gave to the swing  
Of the foot an opening in the tenuous air  
For entrance and for passage of my frame  
Parting the ghostlier presence? Might my hand  
Find finger-space below the surface-dust  
And deep within these granules, were not cranny  
And crevice ever betwixt grain and grain  
Lurking to lend fluidity? Betwixt  
The myriad prime-substantial particles  
Thus must there lurk of prime necessity,  
Not merely as a fiction of the mind  
(For ever must we deny Parmenides!)  
An emptiness, a failure each to fit  
Its neighbor grain; an absolute negative  
Which equally with atom (though denial —  
And 'atom' haply too were negative  
Whilst positive of cosmic import aye?)  
Were prime and uttermost necessity,  
A matrix unto substance, even as substance  
Were matrix to sensation-imagery;

## DEMOCRITUS

That so through vacuum, the inter-void  
(Even as by substance is sensation founded)  
The opportunity to worlds is given  
For inner motion and new attitude,  
For very difference of shape and size. —  
O desert, art thou not as vacuum  
A sand-denial, yet an unity  
Holding in severance and thus in truth  
The sands of ultimate substance? For the truth  
Of vacuum takes hold upon the mind  
To admiration. And Parmenides  
(If in a meaning someway not the same?)  
His universal emptiness hath warrant.  
And I am of the desert stultified  
Who gloried in the sand-grain! Shall my mind  
Be modell'd as to an emptiness, an One  
Elean, despised and yet proved matrix to it?  
Or may there be, as Anaxagoras  
(Or new-come Sokrates) in sort hath said,  
A way of constitution in our thought  
Scarce yielding as to a name, a phantasy,  
Though yet ignoring not the paradox  
That presseth on the reason? There be sands,  
Atoms substantial, all-innumerable

## POEMS OF PERSONALITY

And all-alike; and there be likewise this  
The desert call'd, the absolute nothingness,  
The vacuum but in which, by which, alone  
In virtue of whose barren breadth, the sands  
Are several, ultimate, atomic proven!

I question if a paradox so posed  
Be explicable, as with Sokrates  
(Nor by Protagoras the elder-born,  
For whom no truth were weightier than a name!),  
By inference merely to a property  
Call'd desertness, a severalty-in-space,  
Held as in common of the atom-facts.  
For how might wearying distance so obtain  
Whereto, wherethrough, wherefrom my wandering  
feet  
May journey, were the multiplicity  
Itself extended as by property  
Of every point the same and nought between  
For journey? How might alterance inly be  
Where nought obtains of ultimate otherness  
Save what our thought may from all truths alike  
Express, extract as oil but from the fruit  
Of palm or olive? Though indeed, perchance,

## DEMOCRITUS

Might substance (even as wholly positive)  
In every part self-differently intend  
An inference, whether of the interstice  
Or neighbor-distant granule, through-and-through:  
Even as our mind, with truth shot through-and-  
through  
(Whatever her falsity of imagery  
Sensuous-sprung of overt eye and ear!),  
Containeth, ay, or seems so to contain  
Both desert and the myriad-motived sands  
Whilst, whatsoe'er her physic-base of being,  
Not to herself atomic nor a name?  
I know not, what of Anaxagoras  
Might hold within a land of sensuous fruits  
(A cosmos-scheme of relativities!)  
Bewildering thus the reason, to confuse  
In complications of interpretance  
To purposes anthropomorphic-felt  
Truths true-distinct! But here there are no fruits  
(Nought save sands' multiple presence unto touch  
In primal demonstration — nay, no fruits),  
No facts of sensuous, secondary sights  
Or sounds of the mind — as yonder sky-hung waters,  
In phantasy mayhap, may be referr'd

## POEMS OF PERSONALITY

(So fain I'd understand Parmenides)  
To impacts of the atoms whilst none less  
Of mind contributed! But mine the problem  
Of reason face to face with ultimate truths,  
The vacuous extension, different-held  
In every interstice, nowise atomic  
And yet essential to the atoms each  
Their ultimate severalty! Mine the problem  
Of sands here in their myriads where I stoop  
And lift and sift them all with weight imbued,  
Fragments and fragments, several over the face  
(As wandering, ghostlier airs by chance define)  
Of the drifted desert which my feet press hard  
In passing over; passing only sands  
And sands still of the desert-formative. —  
One comes to wisdom in Aigypotos here  
Where sheweth the primal aspect of all things,  
World's very paradox-necessity;  
Baffling the reason: which remains yet wide  
And whole as sunshine, open, unconfused  
Because distinctively both elements  
In reasonable zeal illuminate  
Confronting unmistaken: neither truth  
Mistaken for a meaning of the mind!

## VERGIL

O MUSE, from Rome's magnificence I haste me  
And splendors of imperial temples, toward  
Thine open countryside and rustic altar,  
To serve thee as I may and them the gods  
Who dwell not under the porch in city walls.  
For Jove is of the open heavens and spreads  
His mantle and the carpet of his throne  
Not only over the fora but about  
The tender and gracious circlet of a sky  
That cometh down along the mountain-side  
Purplish at noon-day or upon the plain  
Shimmers a green of Maius. Hereunto  
I hasten, with the sweet smells of the glebe,  
Of furrow and of the springing sward o'er all  
Wafted and with the tinkle of hundred bells  
From hill-path and from pasture thrilling air.  
For restoration of Italian peace  
Hath brought the shepherd back and him who  
tills.  
And hither I flee, as thousands of the sons  
Of men for countless future generations  
Who seek thee, Muse, or hear thy bell and breath

## POEMS OF PERSONALITY

Within, shall flee the fashion and the fume  
(Thanks, also, unto thee, Theocritus!)  
Of Jove's Octavian panoply, pursuing  
The Jove of oak-land and the oak-loved nymph  
With inspiration of thine utterance.  
For I am rustic-born and yeoman-bred:  
Vergilius, I, herald of field-born things.

The rustic truths I sing of hind and home  
More glorious in the splendor of sun and moon  
Or stars than is the glistening pageantry  
Of torch on torch in painted portico  
And gleam of eagles in an armied Rome  
When some triumvir triumphs in his hour.  
'T is not alone the armies of the sky  
In rank on rank of onrush (though indeed  
Must man Lucretianwise with flood and storm  
Contend, I ween) nor only through the valleys  
The noisier winds our trumpets far outblowing  
Which move me, nor the keen blazonry of beams  
Golden and silver of an Hesperus  
Or wild Aurora; but the fervent sense  
(Through all the generous strife and noblest toil)  
Of friending gods, of spirits of strength and health

## VERGIL

Everywhere round about where men and earth  
Conspire together to bring forth a fruit.

O Muse, 't was surely to the love of Maius  
And fervent friendship for the country gods,  
Scarce for a kinglier city, that they came  
Æneas and his comrades voyaging;  
If fatefully for Rome's establishment  
By hero-fighting on the chosen soil,  
Yet longing unto loveliest Italy,  
Her streams and succoring favor of her shores.  
For was it not from ruin of citied splendor  
And conflict of the Trojan citadel  
Betray'd, that they far over the guiding ocean  
Fled and companion'd of the open heaven  
If weary yet with dignity endured  
In their swift ships and finally to Tibris  
Came and the Latian yeoman-home discern'd?  
If by the fiat of the gods or fate  
Were cities founded and the kingly Rome  
Begun, ah, only with a cultured glebe  
Surrounded and the high labors of the seeding,  
    he ripening and the harvest, to their hand.  
For without sickle and ploughshare may not men

## POEMS OF PERSONALITY

Abide on earth; nor aught imperial  
Arise save swathed in sweet conspiracy  
With Ceres and Tellurian increase-gods. —  
O Muse, from Rome's magnificence I haste me,  
Hailing the splendors of imperial years,  
The templed glories of Octavian power  
Here hidden, but to the eyes of one inspired  
Proclaim'd, beneath the heaven's best height and  
breadth,  
In earth's fecundity of oak and olive,  
Of barley and the blithe flock-pasturing;  
The vine; and all that sprouteth under the toil  
Of country-stalwart folk, the yeoman-breed  
Saturnian, from the Mother! O Muse, I tell  
Of empire's best foundation, as I yield me,  
Fervent for sweet release from urban turmoil,  
To scent and shimmer of this primeval spring!

## JOHN THE BAPTIST

Lo! (for the spirit whispers) cometh one  
Out from these many folk who throng the shore,  
Even to be baptized of me but now;  
Cometh a savior whose whole insight is  
Of righteousness and glory through mankind.  
Yet, though my ministry may mean but him,  
Ay, though the baptism urgeth righteousness  
By sign of the cleansed spirit; how might I  
Absolve him who hath nothing felt of sin;  
I, shamed and sinful, cleanse whose heart is pure?

For I am full of sin and shame, the shame  
Even of these sinners whom I bid repent.  
For I am wild and of the wilderness  
A dweller, lest the sinfulness of men  
Have wholly hold of me; yet shame hath hold  
Of every part of me and is my soul:  
Because I may not see a righteousness  
About me, nor a glory through mankind.  
Sooth, I have said: 'The kingdom of our God  
Is near at hand. Prepare your deeds before  
Just recompense impending!' And have so

## POEMS OF PERSONALITY

Fail'd to attain self-conquest; am as one  
Aware of evil. And this sin and shame  
Of all men, even them I bid repent,  
Is mine; and nought of knowledge of the good  
Nor any justice and fulfilment now.

Now is there one who cometh wholly pure.  
He steps from out the throng, he in his turn.  
And in his coming is mine only hope.  
For in the blessed contact, in the touch  
And sight and sound of him, I hope to see  
Some righteousness, a glory through mankind,  
A justice and full recompense on earth  
Now and forever in the thought and deed  
So wholly freed from evil, in his soul  
So pure and unashamed and utterly  
Unlike these sinners whom I bid repent,  
Unlike their sin and shame that is mine own.  
Even by the sight of him mine heavens shall  
Be open'd and the dove of God, descending,  
Humanize wilderness, ay, civilize  
The wild and savage soul of me who spurn  
All known of me, and so must spurn myself  
To degradation.

## JOHN THE BAPTIST

Lo! he comes and speaks —

His will be words acclaiming power in me  
And righteousness and purity? For how  
Might one thus pure imagine such a thing  
As this my soul of sorrows? Ah, how come  
To be baptized of one deem'd sinful? — Nay,  
He speaks:

“Yea, John; for I, who wholly find  
Mankind a glory, yet have need to be  
Baptizèd even of thee to take men's sins  
Upon me and be utterly their shame.”

## PHILO

THE question of the embassy to Cæsar;  
Might I assure me to take up the task? —

Not in the desert haply nor the caves  
Of rock-bound wilderness may Israel now  
Serve God in strength and holiness but, 'mid  
The haunts of divers men of many creeds,  
Walking the ways as of idolaters;  
Though inly praising God with psalm and prayer  
For insight of a revelation pour'd  
Interpretative of philosophy  
By pictured presentation of a truth  
Which, or in Kroton or Athenai taught  
For rumor of a written Pentateuch,  
Yet, by their wisest of philosophers  
Hellenic-lofty, were but dimly guess'd:  
Who miss the privilege of Moses' tribes,  
The spirit-mightiness of Moses' God.  
Oh, surely I dream not that in literal proof  
Of triumph politic the Jews at last  
Alone shall wield from an imperial throne  
A power like to Cæsar's and be chosen

## PHILO

Successor to the dominance of Rome!  
Oh, rather should power of Scripture, working through  
An earnest exposition logically  
As, ages since, even Pythagoras  
Or Platon or these Stoics latterly  
Have still expounded in half-ignorance  
Scripture and only Scripture to the Greeks  
(With nobleness of thought and loftiest aim!) —  
Rather, I say, should exegesis, patient,  
Transfuse the pagan thought, whilst pagan thought  
Illumine mutually to modern ends  
Of ethic practice in the Roman State  
The picture-proof of Moses — if but he  
The perfect soothsayer, Moses everywhere,  
Be taken (howsoever inwardly  
By parable) for type of perfect truth.  
Yea, though the truth of Scripture changeth not,  
Men's ways whereunto Scripture speaketh truth,  
Men's ways wherein Reason hath practice-truth,  
Are otherwise than in Mosaic hours.  
And Moses, were he here amongst us still  
In Egypt, might not at command of God  
Lead from this Alexandria Israel forth  
To seek God in the wastes of Sinai now:

## POEMS OF PERSONALITY

When every corner of the whole wide world  
Were sway'd by Cæsar; and the Stoic cult  
With truths of Platon or Pythagoras  
Hath half-unwittingly inform'd men's minds  
With Moses; and our ways are interfused  
Hellene with Hebrew to the gain of both —  
To gain of both in spirit, though the flesh  
Suffer Rome's persecutions politic!

Ay, though in ancient days Jehovah dwelt  
(And Rome, alas! would ape Jehovah now!)  
Doubtless in Sinai, gave commandment there  
And guided with the pillar of smoke by day,  
Of flame by night, His people through the lands  
Of dearth and stones where never waters are  
Unless by miracle, and miraculous  
Doubtless did Moses lead the people forth  
From under Pharaoh (hath not Moses said it?),  
To-day, this hour, such Moses might not rise  
To lead from under Roman Pharaoh forth  
Whose power hath hold of all the ends of earth  
Extensive as with God's and absolute.  
(But, ah! may our folk be spared from rendering him  
The rights of reverence due to God alone;  
Which now he claims and would by force exact,

## PHILO

And, whether or no the embassy I take,  
We fain would someway hinder as we may!).  
And therefore is the need to read anew  
The Exodus in guise of parable,  
The wandering in the wilderness, for words  
Of allegory to this future time;  
And understand the peace of promised lands  
(Which peace indeed did yield unceasing war!)  
Not for a temporal dominion, save  
Some Mind-Messiah, yea, for Paraclete,  
Logos of all the angel-daimon host,  
An Hebrew-Hellenist of cultured tongue,  
In God's good time arise to heal the wounds  
Of Judah's spirit decried and wisdom spurn'd  
Of Moses from beneath the brazen heel  
Of Roman bigot! And until that day  
Of logic-wrought deliverance (which each man  
May hasten haply too with prayer or praise)  
Must he who would to Judah be a guide  
Interpret Scripture as a painted wall  
Of old word-picture, mystic, secret glyph  
Scarce-understood yet a paradigm  
Of modern application, helpful aye  
For guidance from the bondage of our tribe

## POEMS OF PERSONALITY

In latter days: the last, I trust, of earth  
Before the coming of the spirit's King.  
But so, no refuge may be from the wrath,  
The curses and the blows of conquerors  
Who hold the Holy City with the grasp  
Of plunder and oppression, who oppress  
Judah in every city of the East  
Or West alike with cruelty of stripes,  
Betraying Israel's trust where God hath said:  
'The lands of milk and honey shall be yours' —  
Though Rome be now of Hellenism the home  
As Hellenism be of mundane power;  
And Israel waits but mind's millennium  
Of coalescence with Hellenic reason  
To earn the spirit-lordship of the world! —  
We wait! There is no refuge upon earth!

Ai, ai; there is no refuge as of yore!  
But now, while yet we wait the culture-hope  
Of coalescence with an Hellenism,  
Must something in relief of temporal shame  
Be largely undertaken, or we perish.  
For now, as said, no lands of vineyardage  
Remain unto our people, save the lash

## PHILO

Of Cæsar's tax-extortion spoil the fruit  
Of harvest and the legions take away  
All profit and all honor from the homes  
Of husbandry and of our Law's delight,  
Despoiling synagogues, ay, ravishing  
Chest-treasure from Jehovah and defiling  
The temple of the body of our maids  
(Which should be clean, for altars of the soul)  
With lewdness and the bastardy of babes  
Which bear the enmixture of a gentile blood.  
That measures must be taken to prevail  
Against the oppression of the Roman flesh  
If Hellenism of Hebraic soul  
(So otherwise than bastardy of blood!),  
The mind's millennium, Logos upon earth,  
Be ever as expected; measures wrought  
In terms of temporal resistance, strength  
Of obstinacy, waiting, working for it  
Even as the Roman works who doth prevail —  
Though not by leading-out, where refuge is not!  
A modern-Moses, were he with us now,  
What might he do for Israel, how proceed  
(Smiting the rock of world's unrighteousness)  
To turn our tribulations and escape

## POEMS OF PERSONALITY

The Roman wantonnesses? There hath been  
In Palestine about Jerusalem  
And reaching unto Alexandria  
Some rumor of one all-uncultured braggart,  
With high but impious claim like Cæsar's own  
And history aping Moses', Jesus named,  
In circumstance ironical condemn'd  
And suffering crucifixion recently —  
Much to the satisfaction, as I deem,  
Both of the Roman governor and wisely  
Of Caiaphas as well; for anarchy  
Well might ensue were ignorance to rule.  
Nay, he could be (a carpenter) no Son  
Of great Jehovah Whom his claim blasphemed,  
No Logos-intervention in the world!  
And (oh, I'd fain 't were otherwise, alas!)  
No Paraclete, Hellenic culture-type  
Of truths Hebraic, shall be in my time.  
Him I shall see not who am growing old. —  
Yet, yet! a true second-Moses in mine age,  
This year, to-day, this hour indeed might strive  
Through influence of the holy picturing  
Newly illuminate with insight fresh  
Of wise interpretation (which my heart

## PHILO

Hath ever loved and reverenced!) to release  
Our folk from bondage, turning thus again  
Judah's captivity! Though, if this be I,  
This Moses — and where else may he be found  
Than here in Egypt? — how should I proceed  
(The call from Horeb being for me intended)  
Where desert wastes afford no more a rescue,  
And Pharaoh for a God upon the earth  
(Spare, Lord, Thy people from the worship of him!)  
Bindeth his yoke on every place thereof?  
Yet, grasp the riper wisdom, in default  
Of desert fastness for escape from Rome —  
More wisely than the cenobite Essenes  
(Who, stung no less by every flesh-temptation,  
Flee but the conflict of the race to-come;  
Without, by righteous works, achieving conquest  
Of any Canaan beyond wilderness)  
Who take the letter, but ignore the truth  
Of fresh conditions — learn and grasp, my soul,  
The reason-teaching, Jewry how to rescue  
Scarce by escape but by a courage nobler  
Of Daniel in the den; taking upon me  
This mission unto Cæsar to demand  
First our religion, to his claim adverse

## POEMS OF PERSONALITY

Of honors superhumanly divine;  
First his protection promised for the cult  
Of great Jehovah; and, that granted us,  
His further admonition to the mob  
And to this cruel Bassus, to allow us  
(As pledged unto our fathers) here in peace  
To dwell in trade assiduously — awaiting  
Still a Messiah to the trump of doom  
If so our people please (the King, I mean,  
Of Spirit-Culture ruling Reason's world!),  
But meanwhile hoarding unto politic ends  
The riches of achievement, merchant-power  
(The waters of the rock-face gushing out!)  
To serve well as the chosen Logos-folk  
Unto evangel of philosophy  
The purposes of kingdom when He come.  
For all may not be left for God to do  
As when His manna fed the wilderness.  
But He will help who first have help'd themselves  
To turn oppression to a secret gain  
And, in earth's sudden clarification, rise  
Soldiers and heralds of the Paraclete,  
Possessors of the earth, knowing to use  
The bounty of the world stored-up unseen

## PHILO

(As practice-wisdom in the Scriptures hideth)  
Till opportunity with hand-of-God  
Display'd in Him Who shall make new all minds,  
Discover in the people of His choice  
(This leaven of the universal bread  
That feedeth Roman, Hellenist alike)  
Already them who hold in fee the nations,  
Exacting tribute whereof Cæsar's seems  
But idle dross. For enterprise alone,  
Not tyranny (more than labor isolate  
Essenelike), shall what trade's own toil creates  
Acquire and hold till God pronounce us Kings —  
Not of a petty, temporal empire, nay,  
But to eternity, time's archetype  
In Platon's creed descried, whose thousand years  
Of waiting, be they tens of thousands still,  
Serve and shall serve best to a patient folk  
For aye-unending opportunity  
And, at the last, fullness of spirit-truth!

Leave to the cenobite the literal word  
Of Moses and of Aaron, Pharaoh 'spoil'd  
By flight unto the desert fastnesses!  
Learn from the lips of men and angels both

## POEMS OF PERSONALITY

The novel exegesis; upon earth  
(Of that same Jesus spoken, with wisdom haply)  
Peace among men until millennium,  
Not for secluded sanctity, support  
In mere provision by a manual toil  
Of unforeseeing mouth-necessity,  
But, labor for fruit of trade, for world-resource,  
Possession of a wealth among mankind  
Exceeding wealth of very Solomon  
Or Cæsar — and the Moses be myself  
To plead a peace, a privilege for toil  
And trade, unto the sons of Israel  
Unarm'd, unharzing; ah, but secretly  
Achieving conquest that our Judah's folk,  
Their spirit-strength in worldly prudence based,  
Be worth the coming of the Paraclete  
(The Logos-upon-earth and mutual wisdom  
Of Moses, Platon or Pythagoras);  
They, used to earth-possession ere He come;  
Ay, worth God's Choice! — For friends have urged  
me on  
To voyage unto Cæsar in the cause  
Of peace, to plead that persecutions cease  
In Alexandria and hate have end.

## PHILO

And I have half-demurr'd, not in the fear  
Of Cæsar's wrath (though well might he destroy  
Such embassy) but, heeding Aaron's way  
And Moses' of escape into the wastes  
As these Essenes and lonelier anchorites  
Mistake the method for a literal  
Acceptance of example! But I see  
(Allowing now the soul to follow-out  
In contemplation every influence  
Making for inward mastery), I see  
And feel the workings of the symbol-truth,  
The mystic meaning to the times applied,  
Like picture-glyphs upon old Pharaoh's stones  
Still sacred though their literal intent  
(The leading-forth by Moses, as I mean,  
To any refuge: which I now forswear!)  
Of Pharaoh's headship, whence could be escape  
Unto a Canaan, be no more believed  
Because of Cæsar. — I will voyage to him,  
A second Moses, there to plead of peace!

## MARCUS AURELIUS

FORASMUCH as the gods have gifted me  
With firmness, with a fortitude to bear  
The burden of this world imperial;  
And by perfervid sentience of mine heart  
Above the stupor of the cooler clod  
To imitate, within, the soul without  
Of the universe at fiery potency;  
Forasmuch as I feel within myself  
(Perceiving, as with sense which seems not sense  
Of stuff material, my frame beyond!)  
This integration of the logos-seed  
Resistive to attack from aught of earth  
And self-containedly the all-contain'd  
Sustaining in the daily storm and stress  
Of strains antagonistic, reconciled  
In power effective of the spirit of me  
Controlling destinies unto mine own  
Of men and nations in the Roman name:  
How should the heart of me, made staunch and true  
By favor of the gods, in least complain  
Of duty and imperial destiny?  
How seek for soul's performance any path

## MARCUS AURELIUS

Sweeter than this of privilege to be  
Upholder to the universal Rome,  
Central support; by high hyperbole,  
Well-nigh as though some world-soul of the State:  
As in our doctrine of the Stoa taught  
Best ultimate recompense of any man —  
Who, death beyond, incorporates with All;  
And dwells, imperial of the universe,  
At last Augustan at the flame of God?

Forasmuch as the gods have made me strong,  
Why murmur as for weakness, why admit  
Weight of the world for burden, be distraught  
At heart with presage of a Rome foregone  
And universe disrupted? Am not I  
Able to labor yet nor be dismay'd?  
And, while the power and honor of the State  
Rest in me, shall this soul of me betray  
The trust, the confidence wherewith the gods  
Appointed me to kingship? Let him seek  
Relief, in whom responsibility  
Meets and awakes no native kingliness  
Of prudence and of wisdom. In my heart  
Have the immortals planted self-control

## POEMS OF PERSONALITY

Wherethrough alone may man control the world.  
Unto my vast responsibility  
(Keeping me thus with nature in accord)  
My nature makes response. Though I be worn  
With bodily discomfort (though the waves  
Beat round!); though Rome be wasted with the years  
As I; and these the Marcomanni knock  
With deathly warning at the open door  
Of self-destruction to our madden'd State;  
Yet shall my soul be firm (stilling the waves  
Reverberative wide!) which feels within  
The strength to save and be (hyperbole  
Of rhetor whilst it seem!) soul-like for all —  
Though elsewise be the days but vanity,  
But sickness and corruption unto earth;  
But gods gone stale who scarce may be fulfill'd  
Save inasmuch as setting man's soul to it,  
Gifting him with the courage to sustain!  
For thus the Stoic wisdom, grasp of truth  
Firm and supporting in the wreck of things  
And Rome's bewilderment, her forfeiture  
Of ancient piety and god-respect.  
For with the forfeiture of fair respect  
Toward gods (the temple-stone's entablature

## MARCUS AURELIUS

Of empire) and with folly of the sects  
Of Christ (seditious even as impious,  
Fanatic, truculent and turbulent!),  
Of Isis or Mithraic mysteries  
Corrupting Rome, hath solidarity  
Of Rome's imperial purport pass'd away  
And in the passing sapp'd the Empire's arm  
Of nerve and sinew: that our legions lie  
Battling along the Empire's bounds alarm'd,  
In panic-desperation though we crush  
These naked Marcomannic breasts anew  
An hundred times with bitterness of war  
Still never ended; whilst the Roman State  
Melts man by man into a common grave  
With these barbarians; or Danuvius takes  
Civic and pagan blood, mere blood alike,  
Down to the distant, dismal Euxine sink  
And there in sacrifice of Parthian hordes  
Lustrates at last, purifies salinely  
The world from Rome's dominion — that a world,  
Innocent of our tyranny and stench,  
Arise that shall forget us! I, the last  
Of Romans (for who else to-day takes heed  
To Tigris?) realize the tragedy

## POEMS OF PERSONALITY

In mine own flesh, anticipate the world;  
And feel in me our tyranny forgot  
And mine imperial load not vainly laid  
Down at the basis of a nobler State  
Haply, at worst even in the womb of things  
Where godliness in conflagration makes  
Of chaos sure foundation. But the gods  
Meanwhile have given me strength to play my part:  
Feeling for mine the wholeness of the world,  
As runs the doctrine. Unto each new task  
Be the wise heart address'd unto the end;  
Forasmuch as the gods have set man to it.

Ay, no man may be (though the Cynics taught —  
Too inaccordant with, or world-without  
Or, world-within the senses of a soul —  
And some among the Stoics have believed!)  
Sufficient to himself, heart-unaware  
Of burden and responsibility  
By tasks beyond the momentary man.  
Though the soul fain were free and sweet to feel  
An inward emptiness in riddance of  
All outward obligation, yet the Soul  
Of All within the soul hath hold on him

## MARCUS AURELIUS

And aye impels unto the task of all  
And universal burden, making light  
Indeed the infinite imposition, teaching  
The way of heart's effectuality  
Even in the linkage soul with soul throughout  
The intimate extension. Nought were known  
Of any world, were the soul-sense, as said,  
Circumscribed in the conscience of the man  
To the mere frame of man as he appears  
Large though on throne of Cæsar loftily  
Yet empty in an isolation felt  
Of passionless self-containment! Yea, were mind  
A tablet razed, then might the vacancy  
Suffer no plenishment; and blank remain  
The world of any meaning in my soul,  
Though ne'er so Antonine, unto this day!  
Yet have things meaning and a passion born  
Of strength, not emptiness. And mind were even  
Some fecundation of an universe,  
A logos-seed still individual,  
A God-containment (in the personal self  
By sense-containment) of the world without —  
In being with me created unto earth  
Whilst in me and alone because within

## POEMS OF PERSONALITY

Cosmic, pneumatic, fundamental, whole:  
The self-control which yields control of all,  
The world-control which is man's hold of truth!  
The man is ultimate; for God within  
(And only Godhood proven of the self!)  
Compels the God-assumption. And I strive  
And strike and am effectual through the world;  
Not evidencing soulhood cosmical  
Of the world as over-god, but of myself —  
In terms of God demonstrable within me —  
The worldhood of a soul: as after death  
Dream'd for deliverance, so now in life  
Myself imperial of the universe,  
From first Augustan at the flame of God,  
Waiting not unto death (which well may prove  
A self-extinction of the person-God  
As of the person?) to create through God,  
As God through me, this warring world of Rome:  
Incorporate of all, life-recompensed,  
Myself by soul the fiery potency!  
'T were thus the undying godship of man's heart  
(True temple-stone of all-world empire!)  
Alone sustains this Marcomannic war,  
Alone remains unbroken with the frame

## MARCUS AURELIUS

Of self or city; godship, by this sense  
Of felt and passionate identity  
(Not in the smoulder'd ashes of a corpse  
But in perfervid sentience rational!)  
Through and beyond this Roman polity.  
This only can enable me to bear  
With fortitude and equanimity  
The woes of the world: a wisdom of the world  
(Scarce of the stale, insufferable gods  
A gift to endure their task nor faint for it;  
Nor of the sheer sensation isolate,  
And so insensible!) which is the God.  
And God is of me as I labor wisely. —  
Where God is of each wise man laboring  
And every wise man laboring is God,  
Must world have solidarity though Rome,  
Ebbing with blood upon Danuvius slink  
To wan oblivion. Though the world be rid  
Of all the gods held sacred, yet shall God  
(Men's worldhood each as soul-alive divine!)  
Give strength; and in Him be the gods fulfill'd.

## PLOTINUS

THERE is a mighty storm upon the sea  
Impostumated after starless nights.  
And I in peril with the driven ship  
Through wrath of elements; though they and I  
(My soul, my mind but godlike more than they)  
Alike be emanation-borne and fill'd  
With peace undying of eternity  
The fearless as the moveless! And, for now  
The danger and the dizziness o'erwhelm  
Of physic-element and sensuous things,  
Shall I enshrine my soul within herself  
Contemplative above the fears impress'd,  
By stimulation taken of the fear  
To search in sense for truth, to seek a sign  
For meanings intimate and ultimate  
In outward things that work upon me now,  
These elements which so assert their power:  
To conquer outward things whilst learning in them  
(An haply logos in them may be found)  
A symbol of the all-ineffable! —

The emanation of the ineffable

## PLOTINUS

Is little like this sea-wind's perilous force  
That shifting blows, whether from east, west, south  
I wot not — blows now here, now there, and yields  
No certainty directive though through leagues  
Hurrying amain and hurling potency  
To world's remotest bounds. But like the gale  
In part, although inverse of operance  
And urging by attraction spiritual  
Not physic-thrust the minions of its mood,  
Is godliest emanation which impels  
With intimate insistence every soul  
(As every wave is driven of the wind)  
Unto her source with onward tendency  
Which needs were Godward whatsoe'er the way;  
Whilst thereby unto seeming vacuum,  
The All-thing that is nothing outwardwise,  
Itself return'd and indrawn, on itself  
Revolving self-contain'd if overt still —  
As these dark clouds like sand-whirl African  
(I fear their gathering fury sinister!)  
Aswirl over the mast-head seem to show  
My storm-bewilder'd senses, though the air  
Itself be black-invisible! Yet, unlike  
Aught atmospheric in directive truth

## POEMS OF PERSONALITY

(From God and Godward whatsoe'er the way),  
The emanations are a constancy,  
However of diverseness infinite;  
A guide to steer by an we need to steer:  
As, Gordianus slain and I escaped  
In peace, the pilot seeks from Antioch —  
I dare not ask him if the course be lost! —  
Romeward to steer the vessel. Thus the hint  
Of circumstance, this storm-experience  
Of turmoil, variance in the things that move  
(In aimless blustering of the baffling squall  
So frame-disheartening and so sickening with  
The giddiness and wallow of the wave;  
And yet withal so inly clarifying  
And stimulant because so beautiful  
In storm's symmetric power balancing  
By force all counter-purpose!) serves the soul  
With thought, with recognition of herself  
In outward things, searching the paradox  
For symbol, for the like and the unlike  
To spirit in this the cosmos. If at Rome  
(First Ostia reach'd by fortune unforeseen)  
I needs must pedagogically prove  
The truths of Godhood the ineffable,

## PLOTINUS

Should sign and symbol for the paradox  
Be found; or words be wanting, nothing taught.  
And, in the weakness of the body sick  
And helpless to assist with any plan  
The steersman, half in fear if half-released  
The soul lies free to beauty, to perceive  
By likeness and unlikeness unto God  
Significance within the element  
Its all-controlling grandeur and devise,  
Built of the beauty, spiritual truths  
(Like universal air) at one with God  
Though given in symbol which she half-rejects  
Whilst half-accepting. For the truth of God  
(Truth not the world as sense perceiveth it)  
Were vortex-void in sooth, nothing of God  
Nor verity, unless the soul (herself  
Of nature mix'd, matter and reason both)  
Conceive the spirit-paradox — in calm  
Of very storm and sickness — and so find  
Symbols which even in unlikeness prove  
Half-like and somewise are of God the truth  
Because of reason though material  
And recognised by soul as of herself.

## POEMS OF PERSONALITY

For, though God be but one (and not an one  
Of unit-quantity that enters thus  
In multiplicity) yet multiple  
(Both one and many as God is not one)  
Is God's self-emanation. And the world,  
Though not God, yet in beauty thus perceived  
Of power and eke of terror taking it  
Allows for life in God and ecstasy!  
And air affords, if scarce by fitfulness  
In fury yet, by cosmic continence  
Of all-impulsive power self-contain'd  
(Although in thrust dynamic, not in love!)  
Some image haply of the ineffable.  
But yet the uncertain wind I would reject  
At heart, that sheweth not an own desire  
(With wrath to thwart the pilot and make faint  
The body by a weltering; though therethrough  
Perchance, and to the gale unwittingly,  
Be soul by relaxation stimulate!) —  
The wind that, like the barbarous and bad  
Of mankind, sheweth not an own desire  
For God but seeketh blindly, gropingly,  
Cloudily dark the way of immanence.  
(The storm were at its bursting, as I judge,

## PLOTINUS

Whilst the ship staggers and the steersman shouts  
Hoarsely his hard commands within the gloom!)  
And how might ocean, vague and agitant,  
Yield intellect a figure? Doth the truth,  
However self-composed of world's dismay,  
In high self-contemplation irritate  
(Like this same sea which beats at her own breast)  
Its all-sufficiency with failure-stress;  
That agony should typify for thought  
The ultimate poise and uniformity?  
If now in misery I yet achieve  
A contemplation and an inwardness,  
Would men, save haply an Origenes  
Hebraic, chaotic and chimerical —  
Would men so take an anguish for a sign  
When, save the Stoa with its cold content,  
Our order'd Hellenism (self-severe,  
Ascetic outwardly) yet makes for joy  
And plaineth only when the very plaint  
Implies a tumult-beauty press'd upon it?  
And as for earth (though, might a long-sought shore  
Loom safe, unshaken, how desirable!)  
Should any principle so dead as earth  
Which of itself would seem to speech inert,

## POEMS OF PERSONALITY

Be liken'd to the inmost core of life?

'T is true that earth were than the air or sea  
More stable, safe for man and comforting  
And hence akin to truth's eternity.

But of itself were earth not purposeful,  
Impellant nor directive potently.

'T is true, too, that in earth, as all men know,  
(Ai! also in these terror-thundering skies!)

Leaps fire unquenchable. And, should we gain  
By fortune of the tempest or by skill  
Right for the Scyllan straits and storm be o'er,  
Should I behold as never hitherto  
(Or, by Neapolis, the tomb of towns  
Vesuvius might serve and Plinius' tale,  
Vesuvius more angry latterly?)

The fount of hidden fire that Sicily  
Hath erst despoil'd. And fire might well afford  
Symbol of self-compulsion absolute  
More marvellous than storm-wind thus and yield  
The truth a teaching and a paradigm?  
And beauty, ay, be felt in fear thereof  
As in this fear of tempest on me now?  
But fire as fire were too tempestuous  
For teaching of transmutation crystalline

## PLOTINUS

Its peace beyond adventuring; ah me,  
Too terrible, unless the fear entrance!  
And I, though fearful and in fear possess'd  
Of beauty-cognisance, would not to men,  
Who well might miss the beauty, teach a fear!  
So, shall a fire which man must mainly fear  
(Despite a latent beauty half-perceived  
For imitation of a wrath-of-soul!)  
Bursting, enraged and life-destructive (ai!  
A bolt that stings and hisses nearward!) grant  
The logos to our logic and be body,  
Filling the pedagogic need of sign,  
To spiritual speech and ecstasy?  
Though *Ætna* seen above the swirling seas  
Might seem a rescue out of all distress  
(The pilot haply may outride the storm  
And reach an haven near Messana's port),  
Yet fire, although the mightiest element  
And doubtless purest, shall not stand for God.

What, then, may stand at all? I deem no stuff  
Nor strength of an universe at voyaging,  
However haply like-unlike to God  
Or truly of God-substance innermostly,

## POEMS OF PERSONALITY

Efficient to embody unto speech  
The truths of emanation utterly.  
And thus my thought, although but now inclined,  
Because of beauty, kindlier unto them,  
Mine inmost mind must solemnly reject  
For symbol each and every element  
(There are but four, despite new-fangled schemes!),  
Air, water, earth or fire, thus all alike —  
Acceptable though unto antiquity  
In texts of physiographers extant  
Who spied no paradox but took the world  
Without significance intelligible  
For cosmos self-sustain'd nor sought in soul!  
The physiographers would sing but myth  
(Anaximandros yet knew boundlessness!)  
Not serious faith: their terms unfit to sponsor  
(Nor is mere breath the spirit, as some would hold)  
For symbol-figure unto spirit-speech. —  
Wherein, at least, that nothing of the world  
As taken in experience of sense  
Sufficeth to exhibit Unity  
Am I at heart with old Pythagoras,  
To whom indeed past and to-come might well  
Be signified of system presently

## PLOTINUS

(Ay, wiselier than by mere Parmenides!)  
In Number, emanation verily  
Out of the womb of Unity, an One  
Ever-repeating in each increment,  
Whilst in such integration overtwise  
Afforded quality, a character  
Definable as unity despite  
Its serial difference from unity  
And so by unity substantial still!  
But, for Pythagoras, although in sooth  
He voyaged, toss'd upon the tumbling seas,  
And should have known their spirit-loneliness  
And need of organon to reconcile  
With distant bliss the hourly dole and woe,  
Seems nought wherein the integrating truth,  
Save if by demonstration cold, remote  
And unappealing to the love of Love,  
Were power and presence to the faith of man.  
For Platon, there be many unities,  
As many as there be within the world  
Life-kinds or aspects, that the voyager  
Might at all seasons mentally partake  
In integration of intelligence  
Perchance, but never in the absolute sign

## POEMS OF PERSONALITY

Achieve, enjoy the ultimate immanence.  
And, though to Aristoteles a truth  
Static, beyond the immediate atmosphere  
(Nor will it aid, with Anaxagoras,  
To make of mind almost an element!)  
Stood postulate and illustrate in each  
And every yearning toward the God of law,  
What way of emanation offer'd he,  
Of mutual interpermeance of zeal  
(Unless by fair example in himself!),  
By any kinship of the God with world  
Inherent unto either mutually  
Or symbol of enshrining sustenance?  
Though someway is the symbol requisite,  
The soul an universal voyager  
Akin to natural facts as unto mind  
And in them known, not as an alien thing  
To alien things created as by act  
Foreign in source to that it mediateth,  
But of herself unto herselfsofar  
As finding beauty by their symmetries,  
Their balancing of forces or of fears;  
Akin to natural facts and needing them  
Although save reason-serving they were nought;

## PLOTINUS

Herself (the soul, as other than the mind  
And thereby making-up the natural man)  
Nought save demonstrable in natural things:  
An emptiness, a vortex-vacuum  
In literal troth and not herself a stade  
Of emanation save she reach both ways  
Worldward and mindward. And the Stoics' cult  
Of physic world-soul (which should contradict  
Their mood-indifference), ay, despite therein  
An hint of intellect, I dubiously  
Distinguish from an antique burning-up  
Or burning-down of Herakleitos' scheme:  
A sign mistook for that it signifies;  
And signifies, if by the proved mistake,  
Too darkly for the teaching of the truth!  
Ah! though I voyage and am wholly held  
In weakness, sickness of the sea-wide wash  
(And fear of the tempest, found yet beautiful!)  
Shall I not yield unto the easier way  
Whether of myth-worn element with those  
Of earlier days or, with the Stagirite  
And Platon, of a truth beyond our world,  
But with the mind seek still if ecstasy  
(A standing in the very truth of things

## POEMS OF PERSONALITY

Though living and embodied) be allow'd  
With weakness of this weariness and fear;  
And vision of the final symbol come  
With swooning of the sorry wanderer.  
The speech must be embodied; else were God  
Without world-emanation and the soul  
Mute in the presence of the sensuous show  
Whose beauty mirrors and partakes of her!  
The speech must be embodied. And the mind  
Turns in upon herself in fear of storm  
Acknowledging the beauty, yea, acclaiming  
With high abandonment the fury of it,  
Will-less but sapient as for ecstasy.  
Around me is indeed a turmoil wild,  
Through fainting senses for a last time taken.  
The waves wax high; the laboring vessel heaves  
And settles with the billows' weltering:  
Her pilot wots not whither, save a sun  
(Unseen yet borne within his reasoning soul)  
With confidence directive guide him true  
And yield him certainties to me unkenn'd:  
The sun, oh! would he conquer with his beams  
The blackness and with safety (which the sense  
Still craves in fear of death) ah! grant us light!

## PLOTINUS

Light! Can it be that, high the mast above,  
An orb is struggling, swirling, straining through  
The hurrying murk? Or doth a phantasy  
In swoon possess me that I seem to sight  
The heart's desire whilst yet my soul is held  
In elements adverse? Doth ecstasy  
Perchance excite a vision of the good  
Rescue-like from this immanence of death,  
Vision of emanation almost as  
The One ineffable? These seeming beams  
Astream, the rent and scouring clouds, the bright  
Blue of the noon and bare beyond the prow  
A lift of the land, a mountainous upthrust  
To *Ætna*'s overpowering eminence:  
All dream'd though in the agony of death  
By virtue of the visioning! — Ah, Light!  
Ah, Light! in whom alone the elements  
Have logos, bountiful emanation, sure,  
Direct, unswerving yet and penetrant  
(What heed, whether man's optic spirits pierce  
Spaceward and thence rebound upon the eye  
Or if sight be an urgent influence  
In pact corpuscular?) ay, penetrant  
Athwart the universal, self-evolved

## POEMS OF PERSONALITY

Unto the confines of the universe,  
Whilst self-directive ever immanent  
In radiance that moves not, searching through  
Far spaces yet remaining at the source,  
Creative as of worlds out of itself  
Without expenditure of force or time,  
With scarce self-diminution: figure fit  
(I care not if, with scant significance,  
Thy name already hath been mouth'd in vain  
In mysteries Mithraic or the tropes  
Of Platon's teaching or Apocalypse)  
For that which must not seem a myth beyond  
The reach of life; which in immediacy  
Of commune mystic is no mystery  
But apprehended of the seeing heart —  
Light! I have found thee in mine ecstasy!  
Though but a swooning dream, above the noon  
Of fear and storm, I trust thee! O'er the soul  
An influence of symbol, to the teaching  
A tongue, the very language of the mind! —  
The sea grows strangely calm! The sailors shout  
As anchors plunge in the brine! The vessel swings  
As 't were beneath the lee of some tall rock!  
My faintness waxeth firm; mine eyesight cleareth.

## PLOTINUS

And light, yon subtlest, shimmering effluence  
Which everywhere from sun outpouring flares  
(The optic spirits be but light's rebound,  
A to-and-fro upon the Godward way!)  
With visible beams about the heavens and o'er  
The face of the glittering sea and on the strand  
And cliffs of island coast gleams ardently;  
A revelation of all elements,  
A thing significant! Ah! not an air  
Wandering unwish'd-for, undirective through  
Cloud-regions whither-whither o'er the wave  
And vaguely landward, nor a passionate fire:  
But thrilling earth and saturating sea,  
Entrancing air, a fire without fear  
And beautiful by soul's-own gladness in it  
And poise of joyous equability!—  
No vision, then? No ecstasy? But plain  
Salvation from a watery wrath with just  
Enough of frenzy-fear's intoxication  
To open to the seeking soul a beauty,  
Teaching her of herself within the world,  
Which (Gordianus slain; but kind, Philippus)  
Now may I teach unto the heart of Rome!—  
An hopeful waiting till the new north wind

## POEMS OF PERSONALITY

Hath spent itself and will allow our course;  
Meanwhile in safety 'neath a crystal sky!  
The baffled gale above the guardian bluff  
Goes wailing. And the pilot smiles serene.

## ORIGEN

WHAT mean the prosecutions and the cry  
Of many perishing, our testifying  
By blood unto the certainty of truth?  
What mean the prosecutions; when the truth,  
Darkly by pagan picture, brightlier through  
God's revelation, if by parable  
And mystic exegesis either way  
In mouths of men yet, as by allegory,  
Were equally intended at the heart  
(For so my Principles have plainly proved)  
Of every man sincere if ne'er so blind  
(Ah! even by Celsus in his falsities!),  
By Platon, Zenon, Philon or by him  
The porter-pedagogue of whom I drew  
Myself a sense of truth, though disbelieved  
In metaphysic, literal detail  
Be Platonist or Gnostic or whatnot  
Of minor heresies? And if myself,  
Following Clement's or Pantænus' strength,  
By proof of loftier insight have opposed,  
Through fifty years of teachings liberal  
And generous to the weaker counterproof,

## POEMS OF PERSONALITY

The lesser evidence of pagan schools  
And spake by splendor of a God reveal'd  
Logos-wise to the reason and the heart  
In Christ His history and parable  
When mystically reinterpreted  
To anagogic wonder — for such share  
In universal wisdom shared by all,  
For such a part in man's humility  
(Which every Christian hath) and wish to  
serve,  
Should emperors and consuls instigate  
These savage cruelties of city mobs  
Whereby among a many martyrdoms  
Of nobler spirits now return'd to God  
Even my poor frame hath suffer'd, that I  
lie  
In prison-durance sick and fain to death  
By dint of punishments unearn'd of men?  
'T is true that man deserveth punishment  
By spiritual fall, but expiates  
Prenatal sin by putting on the flesh.  
'T is true that death-release returns to God  
The enchasten'd spirit with an holy joy  
If only in his life-time seeking truth :

## ORIGEN

A search made splendid and salvation sure  
By evidence of unity with God  
Afforded by atonement, Christ for all,  
The Logos in the world of life and death,  
Exhibiting the soul's eternity.  
But I am old and in abundant pain,  
A paradigm of misery; and needs  
Would understand, where understanding fails,  
This supererogation. Man were saved  
By faith and knowledge — why this suffering?  
Ah, though mine inmost doctrine would regard  
The body of Christ but as a pseudonym  
For Logos-operation from the first,  
For mundane-immanent eternity,  
And therefore very Christ a parable  
Of wisdom and the world's divinity  
Scarce quasi-human in historic sense;  
Where now the cosmic mystery, where now  
Unto this suffering body truth more true  
Than Christ the Sufferer (I deign'd to teach  
But unto catechumens!), He whose pain  
Sufficed unto the ages? Wherefore, Christ,  
I question of Thee, even as man to Man,  
For comfort under torture: why Thy sheep

## POEMS OF PERSONALITY

Be slaughter'd, to what end the wolf allow'd,  
When Thou for all mankind hast suffer'd so?

I query, Christ! not solely for myself  
(Nor even for my father, long in peace,  
Leonides who died as I may die)  
But as I am of many sufferers  
An one to whom Thy gift of tongues hath fallen  
In mark'd degree, that I someway may hope  
By speech in inward disputance to find  
A way of understanding and a sense  
Of God's high Providence to future years  
In these His admonitions of dismay.  
For I am bleeding at these smarted sores  
And bruised with blows, that I am fain to die  
Like to Leonides now long in peace  
My father whom I loved; myself too old  
To bear in Cæsarea far from home  
My pain (nay, I might linger many months,  
As I in exile many years endured,  
Though miserable) who am fain to die  
A testimony to their cruelties:  
I though without a controversial wrath  
(How might we hate at all who learn of Thee

## ORIGEN

The teaching of Thy suffering in this —  
Yea, were it to kill wrath, that we should die  
A spectacle for pity?) — I feeling all  
Opinions plausibly a veil of truth  
Each in its kind for symbol; and mine own  
Faith and opinion but the noblier posed  
And comprehensive of the pagan truths  
In warrant of Thy witness unto men!  
Unto the purpose of a truth prevail'd  
Against the demons' machinating power  
Thy witness was essential: how now mine  
In feeblest imitation though it be?  
How need the imitation of Thy pain  
Who conquer by an imitant belief?  
I grant that, Christ, upon Thy martyrdom  
(As could not be were Thy humanity  
But Logos-mystery and nowise man —  
For, lo! the gnosis still must suffer with Thee!)  
Hang all the Law and Prophets. Yet, should men  
Continually corrupt as with a crime  
Repeated, what supreme of holy proof  
Anent men's long-lost unity with God  
Thy martyrdom provided; when alone  
(I speak the outward-doctrine of my pain!)

## POEMS OF PERSONALITY

Thy pledge of earth-atonement therein given  
And therein erst for aye offer'd the world  
Could sanctify the stigma of the crime;  
And when the sacrifice of merely men,  
Of me or any in the theatres,  
On cross or reeking in the city streets  
Can scarce in least efface the hand's disgrace  
That drives the nail or strikes the lance-head through?  
For we, O Lord, are otherwise than Thou  
Despite best proofs of final unity.  
For we are fallen by prenatal fault  
In earlier lives and are not as Thou art  
Freshly if still eternally from God.  
Ay, we are but the men whom Thou didst save.  
(For, lo! my pain would numb the gnosis quite  
And leave me but the faith of youths untaught,  
Who many years was big with wisdom inward!)  
Though faith be in us and Thy truth reveal'd  
Of Thy part ultimate and absolute  
Sufficing for the cure of every world,  
Yet on our part, save for the fact of faith  
(Remaining now to me, though gnosis fail  
And esoteric dogma for my pain!),  
Save for the simplest fact of some belief

## ORIGEN

And therefore of some inference of Thee,  
Is truth as diverse, as diversely-held  
As there be men: some more, some less in faith  
Enlighten'd by Thy love-life, yet the wisest  
But meaning Godhead as by symbol spoken, '  
Not by immediacy: nothing known  
Of ultimacy save the fact of faith  
With sense of tendency toward God therethrough  
As by Thy death provided. And of them  
Who heard not of Thee but desired a truth,  
Their Sokrates correctly puts it plain  
How all is of opinion; though he miss'd  
Well-nigh the saving confidence for whom  
All was inquiry with no last reply.  
Whilst some there be (in Alexandria now  
Or Rome I wot not, as the years pass on)  
New pagan teachers who, in honest search  
For perfect truth though failing Christian sight,  
Pretend an insight by an ecstasy  
(Like as but God is known unto Himself),  
A standing out of self — we cannot so!  
And yet in them, although the sign and proof  
Be overlook'd and nothing be set forth  
For visioning, there were the saving faith.

## POEMS OF PERSONALITY

And thus, that all we feel or suffer in heart  
Or know of others' patience still must be  
Mainly an evidence of saving faith  
But not salvation, not the perfect proof  
Of God-made-manhood, what were then the worth  
Of prosecutions and the testifying  
By blood and death unto the truth of Thee;  
Which, absolute in Thee, must yet in us  
Be little nobler than a pagan creed,  
Only by one degree beyond a truth  
Of Platon or of Zenon or of this  
Plotinos: if but this Plotinos' creed,  
Learning a content in the fact of Thee,  
Might learn humility! And if Thy love  
Provides a revelation absolute  
In essence, basic to a gnosis-scheme  
Of Logos-generation, as I taught  
The elder, sturdier of inquiring minds  
(Following Philon haply), yet the truth  
Were foster'd not, unless I reason false,  
By prosecutions wherein men pretend  
Pagans to absolute authority  
Which in Thine own example stands denied,  
Christians to sufferings that atone the world!

## ORIGEN

O Christ, in this my suffering I pretend  
No mundane ministration — I but die;  
Or live, maybe, in sufferance the more!

Yet and by faith there is the certainty  
Which needeth not the gnosis, to be mine!  
And we of the revelation (as I wrote  
In Christ against a Celsus' falsity)  
Are rightly fill'd with faith as are not those  
Who base truth but in thought, though subliest-cull'd  
As Sokrates' from grist of many minds  
Thrice-mix'd and mutual-sifted — woe to faith  
Were Sokrates the Savior; woe to truth  
Were Christ of men forgotten! And in Christ  
We hold opinion nearer unto God's  
By sense of parable than any man's  
Who seeks direct in ecstasy to take  
A truth devoid of earthly inference.  
And, ha! why might not such sheer certainty,  
Too proud to confess its entity for Thine  
Chiefly and scarce of self (as I in that  
Internal-doctrine of the Logos-scheme  
Had claim'd save for a sane half-consciousness  
Of merit in the pagan argument

## POEMS OF PERSONALITY

So like to mine and yet so unlike still!),  
Why might not such a sense of certainty  
With hot-head wrath which never could be mine  
(O Christ, I dare a dying, dreadful guess  
Of future things!) within Thy name and God's  
Adopt — with propagation of Thy church  
As the Word groweth and Thy mustard-seed  
(I speak Thy parable for timeless things)  
Supplants the very Empire — undertake  
A persecution of the elder faiths,  
A cruelty upon the creeds of men  
Who lack but light of Thee to love with us;  
And blood-retaliation quite blot out  
For triumph of the grim-eyed demon-crew  
The patience now of dying in Thy name?  
Nay, why might not the growth of Christian power  
(By mine own exile I have ta'en the sting  
Of bishop's scourge for virtue of a truth  
So singly-different from the synod's say!)  
Provoke interpretations of Thy tale  
Seemingly wide asunder as the creeds,  
Then lost from sight and lacking for a foil,  
Of pagan now from Christian; when the cry  
Of blasphemy anent a theme beloved

## ORIGEN

Augment the indignation; and the wrath  
Of men be roused and prosecutions flare  
Church-wide because, forsooth, Origenes  
Hath differ'd subtly from Demetrios  
And held, 't would seem, two doctrines plausibly  
And was a presbyter in Cæsarea  
If not in Alexandrian schools at home?  
Anent Origines of many creeds  
His faithfulness or falsity to Thee,  
Whether his martyrdom were in Thy name  
Or in the name of Philon: such being held  
Perchance anathema to bishop-folk?  
And blood evoked of heresies blot out  
(My thought hath grasp'd the worst that might ensue  
Because of certainty which saveth souls!)  
The patience of us dying as for Christ? —  
The patience of us dying: that is best!  
A testifying to the truth of Thee  
Who died to save the world; that thus we too  
(If I be now allow'd to die for Thee  
And linger not beyond my ripening  
To rot in Cæsarea!) thus we too  
By symbol and by parable of Thee  
Afford a content to the certainty

## POEMS OF PERSONALITY

In passion of renouncement, without wrath  
Exhibit truth-salvation, minister  
In meekness to the saving as of souls  
(Whose bodily hands drive home the piercing thrust  
Of spear and sword or bruise and break with stone)  
Who by example of the faith in us  
Better than prowess brutal of the mob  
May turn to Thee and seek by these my wounds  
A Godliest of opinions which may yield them  
Substance for seeming ecstasy, a Word  
To teach Thy parable in this of me!  
For I am fain to die, wounded and old  
In Cæsarea, exiled first for truth  
And then maltreated by the mob, a man  
By friend degraded and by foe destroy'd —  
Though none the less assured that in such wrongs  
For men's opinions' sake I yet may feel  
Not chaos of misjudgment but at heart  
Their faith; in them the certainty of truth:  
And yield my life's opinion; testifying.

## JULIAN

THE re-establishment of truths august  
And worship of the Gods Olympian,  
The family imperial of the skies  
As they are children of the Mighty Mother  
Cybele and the all-paternity  
Of Mithra, universal fount of life:  
These are my holy purposes, with power  
Of pure authority, from Jove derived  
And nobly in my blood to me descended  
(By lineage, by adoption under law  
Or by imperial legions' legal choice  
Alike) from him Augustus the divine —  
That primal, perfect instance on the earth  
Of God-Olympian come to dwell with men!  
What folly to adopt unto the State  
A rabble-hero, Christos of the mob  
For tutelary; who at best might be  
The offspring of a tribal god, Jew-born  
Though traitor unto Jewry, as I deem!  
What folly to adopt for tutelary  
A probable impostor, an apostate  
(Never was I with willingness baptized!)

## POEMS OF PERSONALITY

And leader of sedition: nowise worth  
To grace a Roman triumph of the East  
(I look for triumph, after Persian wars!);  
Not fit to grace a triumph, but deserving  
The felon's death he died, disgraced, obscure!  
Alas! how could the imperial State be safe  
If built on weakness and obscurity  
When every Emperor himself must stand  
Illustrious, strong and in a father's place  
And power for the governance of men?  
What weakness, if what tyranny perchance,  
Hath been of the bearing of a Constantine  
(Worse, worse of mad Constantius murdering,  
Whose faith profess'd of peace the more condemns  
him!) —

Bearing of Constantine, the hypocrite,  
Who sought by meek adoption of the mob's  
Rebellion in an anarchy to soothe  
The time's distemper, yet drawing tight the rein  
And spurring sharp as opportunity  
Encouraged outrage! (Doth the Christian creed  
Make moral rulers?) Though I well believe  
He little reverenced the presbyters,  
The bishops with their quarrellings accursed

## JULIAN

And fatuous, council-seal'd anathemas  
Because of curious heresies forsooth  
Of anomousian, homoiousian cants  
Confusing the claim'd god-sprung beggary  
By every borrow'd Gnostic quirk of talk!  
How could earth's Imperator truckle so  
To such-like schisms, ranting sophistries,  
Themselves without approof respectable  
Of any poet or philosopher  
Anywhere taught in church or portico  
Their deity Hebraic to attest? —  
Nay, at the best and granting Christos half-god,  
What culture earn'd he of the schools; what art,  
Philosophy or nobler poetry  
Bequeath'd for reminiscence? Just a story,  
A folk-tale parabolic, simply said  
And artless, negligible, save it bear  
An hidden burden analogical  
Someway seditious, someway blasphemous,  
Whereof all Christian augurs (be there such!)  
Make tiresome dispute interpreting  
The pitiful oracle! And where, I pray them  
(Some glutton daubings I at least have seen  
Of sheep and doves and fishes and a feast!),

## POEMS OF PERSONALITY

Where are the sacred statues of the cult,  
The evidences of a gracious presence,  
Austere indeed but none less favorable,  
Auspicious unto him who knows to burn  
The pious oil and in sacrifice  
To draw the knife athwart the victim's throat? —  
Here have I placed upon my palace-walls  
And elevated in a thousand shrines  
The statues of Olympian deities,  
Mine own and many of my kingly race;  
With rescript that the name of God shall be  
Zeus-Father Mithra, no more Jahveh-Son!

And one thing further, ere I crown success  
With Persian conquest, I shall set the Jews  
To building up anew Jerusalem  
In insult to the Christians utterly!

## PELAGIUS

HARK! to their persecution hounding me  
From fierce and schism-disrupted Africa  
At instance of Paulinus to the feet  
Of John, good bishop of Jerusalem;  
Where this Orosius, pursuing far,  
Hispanian though he be, in Palestine  
Lifts tongue of accusation: heresy  
The charge which I must face (Celestius  
At Carthage was condemn'd!) even here where Christ  
Faced persecution for an heresy!  
Almost I do believe I am in error,  
Holding in man a natural righteousness;  
When such a spectacle four hundred years  
Hath shown of derogation from the first  
Inspired acceptance of the heart and help  
(Four centuries long, since Christ in the Temple taught!)  
Which He affords. Some sin-original  
Even among Christ-faith-professing spirits  
(Prevailing now as not Christ-face to face)  
Must hamper the Christ-purpose in the soul  
If back to persecution, paganwise  
As we were Diocletians, savagery

## POEMS OF PERSONALITY

Of accusation and of punishment  
Men hark as though they all a Christ would kill —  
Ay, witness the fury struck and took between  
Their Donatists and Augustinians,  
Too inexcusable of either part!  
And now this hounding, as a dog the deer,  
Of me who in the Holy Land of Christ  
Turn to defend me at the feet of John!

Yet fairly, in my turn! I need not yield  
To falsity but that their ways are false.  
I need not brand the heart of humankind  
For all-unrighteous, but because a few  
Now for the moment have their fangs in me  
(Oh, John is nobler than their Augustine!).  
Grant them, their hearts are hard, lost each his soul',  
Should that truth touch the speculative point,  
Destroy my doctrine of a clean-will'd choice,  
An unpredestinate and native grace  
Of recognition of the right-in-God;  
And force upon the thought their grace-of-God  
Imposed upon a sin-original  
Which (freely, if at all!) must cleave to crime?  
What beggary of reason such would show

## PELAGIUS

Who argue of our freedom, yea or nay,  
By evidence of fault in me or them!  
For, lo! though I assert the will were free  
To choose God or reject God (holding Christ  
Man's best example of the Godhood-choice  
In outward life, as Christ within Himself  
Was Godhead: not the half-god Arian —  
Wherein with Athanasius am I one),  
And that the nobler in us be to adopt  
The right and true, conforming to the wish  
Of God Who made us that we might be saved;  
Though I assert men's moral dignity  
Of voluntary righteousness in God,  
Should any failure here or there of men  
To choose God evidence, in any least,  
The sad compulsion to depravity  
(Proclaim'd of every Augustinian hound)  
Unless God interfere by ceaseless grace  
To bind us to beatitude unwon?  
Or how were God to be supposed asleep  
And negligent of the furtherance by grace,  
Which every moment mundanely would need,  
In leaving to a sole historic spark  
(The flint-fire sole-supposed of Christ-within) —

## POEMS OF PERSONALITY

However absolutely infinite  
In terms of God's, not man's, eternity —  
Men's faith-upflaring to the heat of truth;  
A negligence demonstrable, I ween,  
Insoforth as of man 't were provable  
That few have faith, that myriad multitudes  
Lack grace and are unchosen but in sin  
Live ever laxly; pleading sins supposed  
Of Adam for a taint inherited  
And blame-exemption by the lapse of God?  
How bears the bad example either way?  
Rather should that within the mind of man  
His impulse to discover and to prove  
The truth, our ever-struggling upwardness  
Of effort to achieve and aid and offer,  
In this life-education given of God,  
Example Christ-like unto all men else —  
The strength and sweetness of the spirit seeking  
And finding in the daily tasks of earth  
The way of earning heaven unslavishly,  
The way of doing well by conscience' light,  
Refute the poor predestinary dream:  
Their waiting watchful for an unsought faith  
By grace, while noway working day by day

## PELAGIUS

In will, in zeal toward high humanity  
Firm in the following, for active love,  
The Christ-example to be glad and free  
Upstanding reverent beneath the heaven  
Whence God hath sight of hearts and hopeth for us!  
Whence God need never stoop to intervene  
And thrust the thought of Christ by miracle  
(To spoil our splendor of a conscienced soul!)  
Beneath the cravings of our cowardice  
Who crouch and pray but owe no self-respect  
To make us worthy!

I will have respect

For man as also for the manful Christ.  
I flee no farther but will face my foes  
(Jerome is of them who was erst my friend)  
Not bitterly; but strive as best I may  
To wake them to that soul-nobility  
Which all men, even this Orosius,  
By dint of Adam-lineage may earn  
In following Christ-example, Him Who faced  
The persecutors not with bitterness  
But this alone: 'They know not what they do!' —  
Face accusation with an heart of proof,  
Knowing God made us nobler than they know!

## CHARLEMAGNE

I LIKE not that the See of Rome should set  
Sudden and by surprise the Empire's crown  
Upon me as I worshipp'd unaware!  
It was not as with Leo I arranged,  
That he should so assume to consecrate  
With papal benediction power and place  
Which I by birth and by my labors added  
Have earn'd above the people — that the people  
Should hail me Emperor as though because  
A Roman bishop's act empurpled me!  
'T is nigh intolerable! We had agreed  
Election by the Romans; whereupon  
A coronation by the Pope of Rome  
Pursuant to mine independent right  
Of power equal to Irenè's power;  
Not as some exarch of the See of Rome!  
How have I not befriended this same Leo  
As Adrian before him in my wars;  
Rescued from bodily persecution, purged him  
From accusations of adultery  
By mere acceptance of the sinner's oath!  
And then by solemn trick to be surprised

## CHARLEMAGNE

Unto reception of the grant assumed  
Where lay no power of granting, save my power  
Supported and sustain'd in every deed  
This pitiful vicegerent of the church!  
I like it not. I almost had upsprung  
And smote him down for his impertinence;  
But did refrain within the Sacred House  
Before the people. Yet the cunning priest  
Deserved the blow. For by my complaisance  
Hath not he fasten'd on the Empire's crown  
A vassalage to Peter? Shall not Popes  
Assume and shrilly arrogate to heaven  
And over the wide earth a potency  
Temporal, based upon the paltry game?  
A temporal king? Not he; though Constantine  
Half-gave, no doubt; and Pepin liberally  
Gave lands in vassalage! Nay, nay! in my time  
Shall he be vassal for the Exarchate  
And all things else unto the Frankish King;  
Still vassal merely and no lord in least —  
I warrant me, long as my life endure!  
I take the crown, my right. The Roman people  
At worst elect me by immediate voice  
As peer to any blood-stain'd Byzantine

## POEMS OF PERSONALITY

And suzerain of exarchs — this the point  
Well to put forth in public lest Irenè,  
Bitter at failure of her marriage-plan,  
Attempt the insult of according me  
In Italy pretended vassalage,  
Exarchal office, to appease her priests!  
Yea, Rome and I must threat against the East  
A common front, the Latin with the Frank,  
Whether this Leo's heart be false or no!

Such, such for indignation at the dream  
(I say not 't is of Leo — yet — I doubt me!)  
How spiritual power upon the earth  
Can of itself sustain a temporal arm  
To cope with sovereigns! Such, for policy  
Preventing rupture! And in sooth my mind  
Knowing the power of spiritual place  
When terms, beyond the tenure of this life,  
Are told of recompense and punishment,  
Ah, anxious to show repentance ere too late  
For certain family deeds (nay, not the crime  
Of that Irenè!) and have Popes to plead  
With God for mercy on my sinner's soul —  
My mind is fill'd with piety, with zeal

## CHARLEMAGNE

To render unto God a good account,  
Pleasing to Popes so far as possible,  
Of this my Catholic Empire. The Lombards  
Who menaced Peter's very primacy  
Have fallen before me; and the Saxon hordes,  
Their Irmensaüle spoil'd and carried away,  
Have felt the sword and scourge of Gospel strength,  
In baptism faith confessing, else in death  
Drinking the dregs of outlaw'd heathenry!  
And we of mine own kingdom have been set  
To honoring God by ordering our ways  
In law, in learning and in righteousness.  
I love not Popes. But, unlike yon Irenè,  
Repent and pray and am Christ's champion,  
Protector, propagator of the Word!

## ERIGENA

BOETHIUS hath indeed to us of Rome  
(I mean, the genus of the Latin Church  
And, here among the Franks, our clerky kind)  
Open'd a new possession spiritual  
In strict transference from the tortuous Greek  
Unto the simpler, easier-understood  
Vernacular of the Latin hierarchy.  
Yet and that learnèd scholiast gave alone  
One aspect of the ancient, pagan thought:  
The logic, dialectic organon  
Of Aristotle, him the Stagirite.  
'T is true, how dialectic enters in  
To every utterance of the blessedèd lips  
Ambrose and Augustine and Gregory,  
Jerome, the glorious fathers. But no word  
Is open to the Church of any such  
Who in the Eastern language wrote and taught;  
Whether the blessedèd fathers or, beyond  
The circle of the saints, some Origen  
Or Alexandrian of Plotinus' school,  
Who seems in much, if not in Christ reveal'd,  
To speak as even Augustine hath spoken

## ERIGENA

Of Godhood and of truths intuitive.

I would, the whole wide world could read as I  
The Oriental tongue! And here in sooth  
Are works of one, the Areopagite,  
Erstwhile deliver'd from Byzantium's king  
(I mean no disrespect — an Emperor!)  
As gift to Louis, him whose Palace School  
Under the patronage of Charles, the young,  
I teach and govern. Surely, too, these works  
Speak much of unity of man with God —  
To the misery and madness of our times  
Sore needed! Like the sage Boethius  
(He died, no doubt, for too great honesty!)  
Will I unfearing overset the Greek  
Unto the time's vernacular of Rome;  
And so do service to a future time.

But, whilst I serve by setting forth in speech  
The reasonings of an old authority,  
May I not seem to yield unto the times'  
Servility of mind and grant with men  
The fond supremacy beyond our own  
Of the reasonings of the fathers: how our reason  
Should follow, imitate but step by step

## POEMS OF PERSONALITY

With phrase and passage out of every book  
The earlier opinion; that our mind  
Be nought unless some image of a mind  
Long dead and utter'd unto long-lost years!  
With reverence I say that Augustine,  
Though dwelling in the Scriptures, gave to these  
New meaning by the glossæ of his soul,  
Not slavishly repeating to his times  
A truth long-known and stagnant but, by force  
Of demonstration in a new-born light  
Anew achieving of the truth of God  
A mundane emanation. And shall I  
But copy him the Areopagite  
Or Augustine, or Ambrose, Gregory  
With what of scholarly acumen comes  
In earnest reverence; or, reverently  
Still, of the substance of the fathers' truth  
(And so, of God's) allow new worlds of reason  
From earlier infinite storages to flow  
And self-illuminate our weariness?  
Why rest on old ensample, when within me  
I feel fresh insight, sense intuitive  
Of Godhood in the wilderness of world?  
For was not reason primal in all things

## ERIGENA

(Quote my Magister, my Discipulus!),  
Prior in nature to authority  
Which, though transmitted from the earliest time  
Yet, baseth in a secondary source,  
A past which was not at the first of earth?  
And say not, as with him the Stagirite  
Or those who follow him, that God above  
Give exhibition of authority  
By primal being and a truth reveal'd  
Wheretoward our nature yearneth. For in truth  
The absolute God, being utterly o'er-all  
Without division, doth not of Himself  
Ensample set and sheer authority  
But, only in the creature, as our reason  
Being emanation, God as self-beknown,  
Exhibiteth within and to itself  
The very absolute authority,  
The Godhood of the essence of the man,  
With Christhood of the Father. As did he  
Of Hippo, he the Areopagite,  
Plotinus even, even Origen,  
Shall I in governing my Palace School  
At all cost and at every danger dare  
Assert the ultimate authority

## POEMS OF PERSONALITY

Of the spirit rational, the logos in us  
Still world-establishing. Boethius,  
Who offer'd to the Western world the truths  
Of ancient dialectic, none the less  
Despite the teachings of the Stagirite,  
Declared a modern and a Western truth,  
The present comfort of philosophy  
For guide within religion unto honor  
With self-respect and yielding not to pride:  
And suffer'd of Theodoric therefor.  
May I offend not and be longer spared!  
But, come what may, the substance of our God —  
Reason, and ever insight logical —  
Shall I declare: for that my mind believes !

## ABELARD

AH, every day and every hour, dispute  
And accusation, nowhere any man  
To friend me and protect, not one in the world,  
Save pupils powerless, to support my plea;  
Admirers, yea; but none to lend me aid  
Through year on year of direst controversy:  
A history of calamities tenfold!  
Till at the last this sentence of confinement  
For teaching truth! But, at the last and worst,  
This sudden, unexpected refuge offer'd  
(First instance of protection shown in life,  
First kindness to the oppress'd from any man  
Whose power could make the kindness practical)  
In Cluny and from Peter! Still though half  
Incarceration, judgment of the Pope,  
Yet all the sting and shame absolved away;  
And honorable leisure for devotion,  
For writing (perchance, for teaching?) granted me,  
To end my days of sorrow! Ah, the spirit  
Breaks down within me, melts as ne'er before  
With this new sense of human gratitude  
Calming rebellion; warm humility

## POEMS OF PERSONALITY

And meek acceptance taming arrogance!  
I wonder at this Peter. But a man  
Hath mediated 'twixt an hostile world  
And Peter Abelard. The guardian name  
Hath come between me and my punishment  
With intercession. And I render thanks:  
Thanks to the Saint and thanks to him of Cluny;  
But, save a few with powerless goodwill,  
Heart-thanks to no-one else the wide world through!

Oh, but the arrogance yet, yet uprearing;  
The sense of persecution and the blame  
With which I all the universe upbraid  
Save him of Cluny and the favoring Saint:  
Not Christ, not Heloïse excused at heart  
From some misjudgment — oh, the blasphemy!  
When, when shall I be soul-regenerate  
And inly humble; then to see my life  
As Christ perchance hath seen it, or as Peter  
May see and disapprove and yet in pity  
Move him of Cluny for the baptism's sake  
To ward off and redeem from obloquy?  
And Heloïse? I, in my chastities  
Enforced of mutilation, to her love

## ABELARD

Have long assumed the saintlier arrogance  
Of sham asceticism; when my lust  
It was which brought her to disgrace and dread!  
Not hers the lust: that lamb unto the wolf!  
And hers the love, who out of all mankind,  
Even after such betrayal, clove to me  
And every hour of these long sorrowful years  
(Small blame, to call me cold, unsympathizing!),  
Hath look'd to me for spirit-comfortings,  
Advice and admonition momently  
In every rule, in every utterance  
Of counsel sent unto her fond request.  
And she, her woman-appetite aroused  
(Hath she not so, with dignity, avow'd?)  
Once and for aye from virgin innocence,  
How hath she borne in spirit as in body  
To bide thus faithful to her pledge in God?  
I tremble now before such purity!  
But how atone, how even in sooth repent me,  
Where sense of men's injustice rankles yet  
(Of Bernard his untrain'd impertinence,  
Who argues with a scholar though unschool'd)  
And only from the world an one or two,  
A mistress-wife, an abbot-advocate,

## POEMS OF PERSONALITY

Can in my soul command my soul's respect?  
O blessed Peter, I was born to strife,  
To swift, sharp rancor and the hard retort;  
My truth a proud possession and my love  
A need of proud possession secretly!  
When love was known, discover'd of men's eyes,  
Felt I indeed some pride of public conquest,  
The demonstration of my powers of lust  
(Ah, in dispute, the public power of reason  
Reflecteth glory on the disputant!),  
But yet a chillness to love's ecstacy,  
A weariness at such a common thing  
(Which fain were private, secret treasure-trove)  
As pass'd from tongue to tongue, a ten day's wonder!  
How the hot joy was turn'd to ashen fear  
For shrewd disgrace and the contempt of men—  
Confirm'd in the conclusion: treachery  
To match mine own and violence little worse.  
And then the long, long years of bitterness,  
Silent rebuke toward her whose beauty lured me  
Unto mine own destruction and whose heart  
Was burning-pure, a fiery-fine rebuke  
Though dumb, a blame enduring to mine own!  
O Héloïse, I now confess in Christ

## ABELARD

There hath not been, for all thy mind's revolt  
From service of the Saints, a sweeter soul  
For Mary than doth rule thy Paraclete  
To Christ's best glory. And my claim to God  
Must base in being, through thee, the human means  
Of showing thus the splendor of a faith:  
Even if the faith, so shrined in heart-of-Eve,  
Be more to me directed than to God  
And therefore pitiful — sith I am I!  
But, save by faith, I cannot help thee more.  
Farewell! And may I dwell in death beside thee,  
If so much Cluny friend me at the end!

Now and to true repentance of the mind  
Which wants renewal, 'neath authority  
(As hers a man's authority hath craved)  
In Cluny. And from Peter shall I find it  
(As she hath found it in my cold advice)  
By temperance and chastity of reason  
Learning toward other minds to bear respect  
Despite misjudgment and impertinence.  
This Bernard may be better than his zeal  
For persecution would proclaim of him.  
For mine was a warfare without sense within

## POEMS OF PERSONALITY

Of any wish to win enduring peace:  
Fear, rather, of men's agreement, a desire  
To stand alone in singularity  
Of strange opinion and to base belief  
In demonstration of a paradox;  
In curst citation of the *Sic et Non*,  
The disagreement, counter-statement found  
In writings of the fathers, ridding thus  
The thoughts from reverence, whilst within the heart  
The goal of right adjustment was no more  
And all was chaos in an anarchy  
Of self-assertion — which could ne'er be true;  
Because denying every other's truth  
Though yet the very man were measure of it,  
A Bernard even as an Abelard!  
And God were nothing! If within were reason  
And rightfulness (I never did deny  
The Catholic faith!) yet all upon the tongue  
Was arrogant insistence and contempt  
Spoiling the message or the fruit of peace.  
But now, the new protection breaks the pride  
To gratitude, an homage unforeseen,  
A tribute of the conquer'd character  
Too unexpected when the combat raged

## ABELARD

And every man's hand was against mine own.  
'T is somewhat the surprise that breaketh through  
The madness of a life-time; somewhat also  
The suddenness of release from bodily fear  
When fear had kept me cruel. Right or wrong  
In doctrine, now the citadel of soul  
Hath been surprised to a surrendering  
Of strife, and by a generosity  
Disarm'd where persecution had but steel'd  
To bitterer contention! — Héloïse!  
From him of Cluny have I learn'd the way  
I could not learn of thee; though thou hast taught it,  
Thou ever, whilst my soul was blind by pride  
To love and love's true lesson in thy soul:  
Thou, mistress and teacher in the path of God!

## BERNARD OF CLAIRVAUX

OH, fearful failure! Everywhere the arms  
Of Christ defeated; and the glorious host  
Of soldiers of the Cross, in pitiful flight  
Or desperate defence, but one by one,  
Thousands by thousands 'neath the infidel  
Destroy'd; till only sacrifice remaineth  
In lieu of all the splendors prophecied!  
And, under God, was I, the meek Bernard,  
High priest and prophet of the cataclysm!  
I shrink aghast at visions of dismay  
Brought home and desolatingly retold  
And told again, with curses on my name,  
Of them who hardly escaped and sped  
Hitherward, the mad wreckage of the rout.  
I fear not men's reprisals. Let them come:  
Some crazed, ecstatic, devastated soul  
Of knight or man-at-arms, to tear the cross  
From bosom and on bloody spear impale  
Bernard the sad impostor, false, forsown!  
Ah, Christ, if only it were such as that,  
A death by martyrdom with them thus shared!  
Scarce, scarce should I shrink from it. For to see

## BERNARD OF CLAIRVAUX

Europe appall'd and stripp'd of glittering knights  
And gleaming soldiers gone to wretched graves  
By rusty tens of thousands, through my fault:  
That is to dwell, O God, as in hell-fire  
On earth and aye anticipate the End!  
Yea, 't is the spiritual pain which easeth not  
For that 't is tongue of mine upon the earth  
Hath stung men to this havoc wantonly!  
Where, now, the sense of sustenance by Thee  
Provided in the preaching: outwardwise  
By miracle, by conversion; inwardwise  
By truth-assurance and the righteousness  
Of rescuing the Christian warrior-power  
Which, bruised and batter'd of the infidel,  
Threaten'd collapse — as come upon it now?  
Where, now, the human confidence, which seem'd  
So superhuman, so inspired of Thee?  
Lost, lost but with the human panoplies  
Of power and purpose to effect the right;  
Gone with the hope of victory! — O God,  
Must human faith be brave for works alone,  
For outward evidence to heat the hope;  
And pale to skepticism and blasphemy  
Because the expected earth-accomplishment

## POEMS OF PERSONALITY

Hath somewise else and in another sphere  
Perfected prescience of Thy Providence  
Than in the pettier plan mine hand design'd?

The pettier plan! Merely to aid a power  
Grown evil as the veriest infidel  
In purlieus of the worse-than-Moorish stews  
Where Frankish Templar or a Flemish prince  
Oppress'd and pander'd, with disgrace to all  
Call'd Christian, in Thy land of sepulture?  
Merely by tumult of a ribald crowd  
(Their sin-remission crass-miscomprehended),  
Of rough and roystering men and women lewd,  
To aid in riveting on the Holy Town  
Of Thy nativity an iron guile  
And craft and lust of power which no bright  
cross  
On breast or armlet could redeem in men  
Unless by Thine inscrutable chastisement?  
Ah, holy in petty purpose for the nonce  
By exaltation of the moment's oath  
The takers of the Cross; and holier now  
(Their sin-remission splendidly achieved)  
Who, sacrificed unto Thy chastisement,

## BERNARD OF CLAIRVAUX

Lie dead, unburied on the parching sands  
Or in the rocky gorges food for kites —  
Of these the bones are noble; for they fell  
Obedient to the larger call of God  
Transcending human purpose: and are saved!  
So, of the many miracles: no whit  
Dishonor'd in the infinite defeat  
Of that they seem'd to guarantee to men!  
So, of the preaching: righteous to the last,  
O God, that I discover by Thy grace  
(And firm shall preach) the infinite chastisement  
Of them who perish'd; and of us surviving  
Who see our homeland desolate, our knights  
And men-at-arms no more, and every hearth  
Mourning a vacancy! Oh — should there come  
An halt, a blind, a man possess'd, to ask  
Anew the healing miracle — with faith  
Even as or e'er thine awful punishments,  
Shall I but pray: and Thou wilt ope the eyes  
Or cure the cripple or cast out the fiend;  
That, when comes knight-at-arms to hew me  
down,  
The miracle-achieved shall turn his soul!  
And, with me openly upon his knees,

## POEMS OF PERSONALITY

That cow'd crusader, humbled utterly  
And saved, shall pray Thee as in brotherhood  
Of chastisement accepted: I and he  
Alike rebuked, alike to sight restored.

## FRANCIS OF ASSISI

God's poor; and Jesus Christ the chiefest of them,  
Supreme in service, if but ill-equipp'd  
(Unless in Godship!) so to minister;  
I, little friend Francesco, like to Christ  
In poverty, if wanting Godship to it!  
For poverty at least, that power is mine:  
No stone's-weight of an impotency, born  
(Mock-Damiano, ever to be built!)  
Of the need of self-protection: burdensome,  
Or, by the privilege of personal stand  
Against aggression, arrogating pride;  
No vaunt of value for myself to hoard  
Of world's respect, precluding brotherhood  
With very lazarus; and such brotherhood  
By love, my high responsibility  
Unburdensome, uplifting everywise!

Could one but love world-riches, then, o' sooth,  
Might service lie with such in squandering  
To charitable use; as, at the first,  
I flung the proud cloak off to clothe the back  
Of starving valor! Nay, but love no whit

## POEMS OF PERSONALITY

May dwell with pride: and pride is property. —  
Ah! little sisters of the woods and fields,  
Sweet flowers; or tiniest songsters unto God,  
Ye brother birds! with ye community  
Of goods and heart is mine: free from all care  
Of worldly profit, free so to praise Christ  
As joy and blessedèd beauty in ye praise Him;  
And joy in me (if scarce the wonder-gift  
Of beauty) praiseth ever constantly.  
Lo! here in the forest-hermitage I harbor  
(Alvernia, where kindness lets me lie)  
Like bird or flower by the dew of God  
And bounty of the heavenly hand of Christ  
Meekly sustain'd at table of the poor,  
The wild, the free fraternity of joy.  
And with my heart and tongue I'd praise the Lord,  
Like as the bird or blossom praiseth Him;  
I, fain to make laudation now aloud  
With thanks for every creature; most of all,  
Perchance, for me that I thus may ensoul  
Some hours of contemplation, whilst the body,  
My soul's dull, plodding bondman (hands and  
feet  
Scarified and world-weary), take that rest

## FRANCIS OF ASSISI

Which labor-long infirmities require  
Ere once again to labor it return.

Ah! pride pervert, maybe, and property  
This rest from labor in a private joy!  
How deem me poor and free from arrogance  
(How deem mine, love?) who have one hour mine own  
For contemplation of the cure of Christ  
And praises creature-like unto His name:  
When cures of earth, to saving of men's souls  
In freedom of devotion minist'ring,  
Are calling, calling from the neighbor-plain  
Below my mountain, calling to mine heart  
For saving service, as to Christ's own heart  
The world was calling, calling: that He came?  
For thus this love in me, if ne'er in Christ,  
This very love when sensed unto itself  
And felt for spirit-privilege (indeed  
As never in Christ's ministry!) becomes  
Itself a source of arrogance, a pride  
And property which, for the love of love,  
The heart must squander charitably alway  
Or leave the soul in contemplation sunk  
Aloof as never lay the life of Christ

## POEMS OF PERSONALITY

Aloof from sympathy of hand, of feet  
Forever walking over the wide world  
In sacrificial ministry unshod. —

Ah, woe! then, for mine order'd Brotherhood  
Of souls too rich in love to salve that love  
By urgent sympathy of hand, of feet  
In missioning unto the earth's confines,  
Squander'd to lose itself sufficingly  
In act, in motion-mendicant (creating  
Of other men alms both and love) or labor  
Alms-giving and alms-given to the need  
Of nature, frail and empty save of need —

In act, nor turn upon itself within  
In contemplation privily and proud!  
Ah, woe! for power and riches spiritual  
(The heritage of them who follow me,  
By my default); alas, for arrogance  
Sprung of a human love that finitely  
Must turn upon itself and fail to spend  
Infinitely in service and be poor!

What have I done, who, turning hearts to love  
And service, have evoked within the soul  
Vainglory of such service and the pride  
Of love-possession, though in Christ enjoy'd?

## FRANCIS OF ASSISI

The Christly crucifixion (wounded hands  
And wounded feet world-ruptured), caused it this?  
The purpose of apotheosis, through  
Theophany, transfiguring, but wrought it  
That men by God-example (infinitely  
Spending, all-unpossessing) should be prick'd  
To pride of service, wisdom of the tongue  
In praise of His creation, but no jot  
Impell'd to service of the hands and feet  
In self-unsaving, perfect poverty?  
Are these: these marks of helplessness in man,  
Of dream-tied desuetude of hands and feet  
Self-suaging (these toil-blister'd hands and feet  
Way-scarified which here luxuriate  
Taking their ease aloof from cures of men):  
The outcome human and contemptible  
(If anything in life can earn contempt?)  
Of those world-wounded but unwearying  
Crucified hands and feet, mine ecstasy  
Perceives in vision through the forest-boughs  
Cross-like and quivering with an heavenly light,  
His stigmata of utter sacrifice?

Down from my mountain to the humbler plain

## POEMS OF PERSONALITY

(Now at the last as when Christ call'd me erst  
To lifting of San Damiano's stones!)

I haste me; here upon my feet and hands —  
I feel them for spur both and punishment —  
The marks of impotence, the stigmata  
Envision'd of Christ's perfect sacrifice.

For hands and feet from now unto the end

(Not flower-like, bird-like — though perchance they  
too

Feel care and failure? — nor for private power  
Of love-possession but, with fault avow'd  
Of failure, insufficiency to serve)

Shall serve Him as at table of the Lord  
From Whom life all is alms, at beggary  
Of love, for love's sake: not for any joy  
In primal brotherhood with bird or flower  
(Save labor unto death be joy and praise  
Permitting song aloud an labor cease not?) —  
Ah! not for any joy with bird or flower  
Of little friend Francesco praising God.

## FREDERICK II, HOHENSTAUFEN

MAGNIFICENCE almost miraculous  
Of promise and performance I command:  
I by a word redeeming from the blame  
Of Paynimry this Holy Sepulchre  
And these waste places of Jerusalem!  
Not armies nor the valor of Christendom  
In decades hath accomplish'd for the Cross  
What sane sagacity and temperate zeal  
With tact of reason and a wise respect  
Toward honorable enemies have wrought:  
I treating honorably with the chief  
Of Paynimry, opponent of the Cross  
No doubt, none less a king to whom respect  
Is ever due from Order's champions  
Of faith and of right dealing in the world.  
King, quotha, unto whom respect is due  
Although in arms against the Cause of Truth!  
King, quotha, how much more to whom respect  
Had been accorded had his cause been mine:  
As Order's champion I of Cross and Truth!  
And am I treated with respect thus due  
To virtue and power and accomplishment

## POEMS OF PERSONALITY

(A virtue firm beyond ascetic shams,  
And naturally in joyance exercised!)  
In service of the Cross, in thereby saving,  
Not selfishly the soul but, for mankind  
The Sepulchre and sweet Jerusalem  
From infidel defilement? Or am I  
Reviled as outcast, worse-than-Saracen,  
Because, forsooth, my merits make alarm  
To him mischosen Shepherd: Roman wolf  
Rapacious over Christendom and hateful  
Of Christendom's crusading conqueror now? —  
Templars and Hospitalers and the swarm  
Of sycophants pontifical, avaunt!  
Leave to my care the conquest ye but hinder'd!  
Clutch with your claws no crown belonging to me  
By right of royal marriage as by rule  
Of personal possession! By no Pope  
Nor Papal hirelings shall I be debarr'd  
From kingdom won by king-sagacity.  
Ah, nobler Sultan, rather had my rights  
Drawn warrant and support from thy bared sword  
In honest enmity to overcome  
Than earn establishment from Romish troth  
In bull embodied! — Excommunicate

## FREDERICK II, HOHENSTAUFEN

(Scorning the priestly, futile interdict  
Which would rob Christendom of all I've won!)  
I glory in the hatred of a Priest!

Kameel! ah, how might thou and I allied  
Restore world all to order, make of East  
And West conjoin'd a sanctuary of faith,  
Right dealing and respect where such is due!  
What matter if Mohammed or the Pope  
Be God's vice-tyrant, when our meeker Christ  
Gives unto thee or me alike, I ween,  
Leadership in a soul's nobility:  
Thy teacher second only unto him  
Of Mecca, as my Second-unto-None!  
How were the world revived, if under us  
Jointly and severally controlling earth  
To earth's own good and joyance naturally  
Arose a new religion, vivified  
And vivifying by the soul's release  
Both from this internecine strife of creeds  
And from the incubus of priest and Pope!  
Now, by my vow to serve the Christ's true Cross  
Unservile of the Pharisee of Rome,  
What duty were more chivalrous than this

## POEMS OF PERSONALITY

To disestablish tyrannies of soul  
And set a loving liberality  
Of generous sympathy with humankind  
Toward every human enterprise and strength  
In stead of priest and wolfly parasite?  
By mine investiture as Knight-at-Arms  
And by this crown of Christ's Jerusalem  
My high inheritance, shall I not swear  
A reign of brotherhood and beauty born  
Of practice and perfection in all arts,  
All ways of exquisite urbanity,  
All understandings of the facts and laws  
Of mystic informations yet occult  
But under such prospective patronage  
Become the illuminating discipline  
Of many? Like justice, shall not poesy  
(With spells and power over spirits of Hell  
Learn'd of the lyric Semite) be for boon  
And birth-gift of men's souls beneath my sway,  
United in a novel Christendom  
Half-Saracenic, half of ancient cults  
(Hellenic or Mithraic, Osirian!)  
Restored; yet wholly in the love of Christ  
And lore of His inheritance transform'd?

## FREDERICK II, HOHENSTAUFEN

Kameel! ah, could thy hand but crown me now,  
How graciously might thou and I achieve  
The rebirth of the luminance of soul  
In disestablishment of him of Rome:  
Ascetic dotard, Caiaphas two-faced,  
Frost-blight upon our flower of chivalry!

Wolf-blight, alas! upon the Christly fold,  
With age-worn fangs still fasten'd in our flesh!  
Why waste I hours of proselyting here  
In Palestine: a land which well might lie  
Smiling beneath the Paynim scimitar  
For aught concerning Europe; and which best  
Might serve for stimulus of intercourse  
'Twixt Saracen and Christian humanizing  
World-civilization, were our arms withdrawn?  
Why waste I here the hours Gregorius  
Doubtless improves to poison hearts at home  
Against mine orthodoxy, to impugn  
My fair faith and incite a treason in them?  
Why waste I for this bauble of a crown  
(Or publicly to prove my Christianhood  
Forsooth!) such moons as may from all my stars  
Withdraw beneficence; whilst he of Rome

## POEMS OF PERSONALITY

With subtlest machinations undermines  
My power of empire and ascendancy  
At home? Kameel, ah, never can my home  
Be far from Sicily; nor heart of mine  
Forget the boreal burg that bore my race!  
Let generosity relinquish here  
The conquest, for thy hand to seize again  
The governance which thy straightforward faith  
Hath shown thy due — ay, only with the crown  
When once I have been king'd by mine own hand.  
For then to Rome, to Rome (these mistresses  
May follow whom Kameel hath promised me);  
To Rome, and crush to earth with iron heel  
The serpent of the Papacy! To Rome,  
Ruin and devastation in my train!  
That from my throne secure I lean at last  
The hand of brotherhood to thee, Kameel;  
And Christian fellowship; establishing  
Peace and the power of the mind of man  
Athwart all seas; and joyous chivalry,  
The rule of love, true service of the Cross!

## VILLON

'A VAGABOND'? — You good Samaritan!  
Peace to your fears of personal compromise!  
No Provost nor no gibbet will hang you!  
You catch no foul infection of the plague  
On fur and velvet, ay, and glittering chain  
(The jewel likes me; but, hands off, I say!)  
Helping me here to bread and wine for once  
A bellyful; no vagabondage smirching  
Your stiff, respectable, rich smile and style,  
Unsmirchable by rags and tags of mine!  
Sir, that you seem to fear contagion, shrink  
From contact with the soul you stoop to save  
(Just lifted from the oublie of Meung  
By grace of Louis whom the Saints preserve!)  
Puts me in mind to make demand what show,  
What substance in this soul of mine you'd save  
Or rat-bit carcass that contains my soul  
First proved effectual in appeal; what folly,  
Freak, rant and posture of the vagabond,  
The tavern-ruffler and the loose-of-life  
Fresh from an unjust Churchman's dungeoning,  
Drew dignity so to stoop to-purpose, lift

## POEMS OF PERSONALITY

And lave and lay 'mid dignified disdains  
Raggedness and this outcast of the ways?  
Friend Charles of Orléans cared not as much  
For the better brother-rhymester he well knew!

Was it some sense that raggedness hath rights  
Of raggedness, a claim to the world's regard,  
In person of the mercer prosperous,  
For its custom of abhorring custom, style  
Of no-style, stiff decorum (call it so)  
Of rough contempt for your decorum's lore?  
Now must the plain corroboration, proof  
That vagabondage but accepts for due  
Merit of vagabondage your main zeal  
In sanctifying, lifting, stiffening me;  
Now must this recognition how your guess  
(Your jest?) proves intuition and I show you  
No spark of gratitude toward grave reform:  
Must such fulfilment turn your love to loathing,  
Sour your pity to this pitiful fear  
Of soul-contamination (did I say  
The fear of the public executioner?  
Far be the insinuation!) that you judge  
(Ah! pardon the harping on the hangman word!)

## VILLON

Your act no kind cure of a crusted soul  
But a succoring of the harden'd gallows-rogue  
Quite inappropriate to the pledge you hold  
(A vow, mayhap, for some sin? Oh! my master,  
I mean no crime beyond a trick of trade  
Strictly absolved by sharing of the spoil!)  
Of Christian charity toward — scarce toward me  
Who, hard of heart as hard of head, laugh back  
Your platitudes preach'd by the Prior, no doubt  
(I heard them at the University,  
A pest on 't!) back upon the hide-bound brain  
Of you who not once dream'd there might be souls  
That chose to sin because the sin rings true  
And makes a brawler's ballad; chose and choose  
To follow a glint, such as the glint may be,  
To the bitterness, the brilliance, of the dust?  
I have an absolute pardon, sir, fire-new;  
And fear not Informations! Let me talk  
In lieu of silence these so many months.  
Tabary swung for too much talk; not I,  
With kind King Louis in my wallet here.  
(Unless? Unless? The girdle likes me much!)

We part, then? Yet, in thanking you for succor

## POEMS OF PERSONALITY

Such as my need imperative demands,  
Purseful and bellyful and brain stuff'd full  
With pictures of the Paradise you paint  
(I'll put it in a rondel overnight! —)  
For foil against the Hell I choose to choose;  
Yet, in acknowledging my boon of you —  
I pray you, master, seriously for now! —  
I acquiesce in no disparagement  
Personal of the beggar that I am:  
Who beg from the rich to give to the poor (glib cant  
Is parcel of mine impertinence!) my friend,  
Who take of you by power of abject need.  
For with the satisfaction of the need  
Goes no confession of the need's disgrace!  
Sir, what were your vain wealth and self-resource,  
Even to the sham soul of a prosperous man  
Bound in a vow — ay, by such very test! —  
But for the vagabondage you abhor,  
Prescription, intercession, to your sins;  
By field for penance or by charity  
Best justifying riches and world-ease?  
I'm the arch-scapegoat. For 't is a life like mine,  
Life for life's sake, no vulgar gain in view,  
That yields you well-behaved and prudent men

## VILLON

Prosperity of body as of soul,  
Power in both sorts, through emptiness for me.  
And now: I have not made my way in the world —  
I put a euphemism as would Charles,  
Though with mine own mad irony beneath!  
So, because wealth has stoop'd to succor me,  
I was supposed to wake at last to the worth  
Of custom and convention in the world  
And this the enviable that goes therewith;  
Avow mine error, mend; and make my ways  
Your ways, outstrip remorse by some reform,  
Accept gratuity through zeal to earn  
Position, independence; fain to pay  
Gratuity back and quit the claim? Nowise!  
I grasp gratuity for greed's own right  
An you will: nay, rather, for your soul-need of gift,  
Need of the unreturning charity;  
The worth of ingratitude, and grandest gain  
By the gift of good regardless of good end  
(Unless in salving of your private sin!)  
Succoring raggedness for succor's sake  
And the right of vagabondage to go free.  
Sir—for hyperbole!—'t is you who shrink  
Aside through byeways from the walk of the world

## POEMS OF PERSONALITY

Even in your 'broider'd costume of world-style:  
You laboring ever for an end in view  
Beyond work; rest and recompense and power:  
Ay, in this world or in a next, a goal!  
You in your servile goal-dependence spurn  
The world's real way of life for life's sole sake  
(And at the last some mocking testament!)  
Life asking no reward, but just the commune  
In brotherhood of all else who live thus  
Above the fear of failure, quite beyond  
Your personal compromise though bishops starve  
And provosts hang me for the cure of crime!  
'T is your soul starves the soul in me despite  
Alms; for your charity yet shames the soul.  
Ay, 't is because of you who'd work for ends,  
For purposes and prospects, that I fail  
Rescue the world and need your rescuing!  
Sir, did the whole world, Paris here and Blois  
Where Charles lies in his dotage, rotten-ripe,  
And Meung with its good bishop — curse him! —  
    dwell  
As I have dwelt in wide community  
Giving and taking as I give and take:  
Because, by yielding gift of all we have,

## VILLON

A ballad or a rondel it may be,  
Deserve we limitless bounty, benison:  
Then were the wisdom of the ways of you  
No wisdom; stigma of the vagabond  
Your due; and vagabondage recognised  
Wisdom, the moral and the strict and right,  
Sanction'd and custom'd through new peace on earth,  
Needing no gibbets; nor no charity!

Nay, master, for the succoring have thanks;  
Not thanks as for obligation due the great  
From humble vagabondage, yet for grant  
Of opportunity to loose my tongue  
Long-used to dungeon-silence! Ah, one's creed  
Needs stating sometimes in a forthright prose  
To rob the rats of breakfast and exalt  
The beggar a little above his bread! I go  
Ranting, profaning — if you call it still  
A blasphemy, what care I? Write me down  
For the Provost's galaxy of cunning scamps  
(In faith, the Provost knows me very well!  
And by more names than one the pardons read  
Of blest King Louis whom the Saints uphold!)  
This scamp a cunningest; who hoodwink once,

## POEMS OF PERSONALITY

Never again so long as wrath endure! —  
‘Heretic’? ‘Platonist fellow’? You’d retract  
Half your donation? Take it, in despite  
Of the truth of this I’ve just exhorted you  
Of the utter thanklessness of poethood!  
What? No resentment? I will keep the gift;  
Count so much toward the cure of your kind soul,  
Respectable, prosperous, but none the less  
Samaritan toward graceless vagabonds!  
My duty to the Provost when you meet! —  
Nay, by your leave, the chain and jewel too!

## CHARLES V

OH, vast, imperial and vain regret  
Wherewith am I tormented; this mine office  
(Whose woes and burdens would I fain put off  
For sack-cloth of the cloister of the soul)  
Distracted with the mad, rebellious wars,  
The heresies internecine sprung of him  
With whom, when at the Diet sore blaspheming  
Him held I in my doom-pronouncing power,  
I kept a pledge, an oath misfortunate  
Of too secure return unto his friends;  
A pledge miskept with heretics, an error  
Which very faith and truth from out the earth  
(Unless God by new servants intervene)  
May some day drive and utterly destroy:  
Witness the shameful tolerance decreed  
To which I yield consent in sad defeat!  
Ah, woe! that I, by private troth compell'd,  
A fancied individual honor bound,  
As Emperor with God's great world in charge  
Thus falsely and thus faithless to my trust  
Bare sanctity of a fealty but human  
Above the duty and service owed to God!

## POEMS OF PERSONALITY

'T is this which drives me now to my despair  
And proves me fit but unto abdication  
(Though still be many a task to undertake —  
First, first to drive the French from ravished Metz!),  
Acknowledging by penance in abasement  
The ever-cumulating consequence  
In spiritual pestilence, alas!  
Born of my soul's infection when I proudly,  
Mistakenly to privilege of reason  
Clove in a knightly, upright honesty  
Forsooth as my misguided judgment held;  
Though God's imperial obligation urged me  
(And many a secret, sacred hint from Rome!)  
Unto the perjury for Christ's faith's sake!  
Ah, thus the Holy Father's legates prove it  
With closet-exhortation hour by hour  
My fault indubitable; whilst, too late,  
I can but now resolve my soul to save,  
Sobeit possible to the steward fruitless,  
In cloister'd meditation to the end  
That earth shall shake under a surer sway!

How miserable the frowardness of man!  
How pitiable, were it not so base,

## CHARLES V

Mine insolent self-reliance, when the world  
Had sudden need of new obedience,  
The Christian need of crime unquestioning  
When by the Church commanded! I was born  
Heritor of a thousand hard-won years  
Wherein the individual sanctity  
Of personal oath (for all the cunning tongue  
Of Machiavelli with the serpent-craft!)  
Had for a bond of troth 'twixt man and man  
Securely been establish'd; that my soul  
With sense of high-achieving chivalry  
(No fealty absolving them beneath me  
From knightly dealing with the least below!)  
Was nurtured and sustain'd within a world  
Where honor only, save a saving creed,  
Seem'd worthy of a kingly character  
Too often forced by circumstance untoward  
To tyrannies still honorably plann'd.  
And into such a world was I indeed  
Born to an universal heritage  
Of power well-nigh imperial; then, by gift  
Of God's grace and the election crown'd o'er-all  
With absolute opportunity to rule  
And guard the world unto the glory of Christ;

## POEMS OF PERSONALITY

And absolute responsibility  
In temporal things, the comings and the goings,  
The words and deeds (so be they honorable)  
For king-command subjected to my will:  
My wish, the heir-adopted gerentwise  
For overt will of God; and at my hand  
The Holy Father to pronounce of well  
Or ill within our body spiritual!  
What outlook had been nobler, wiselier plann'd  
To make of man, of me the Imperial King,  
Paragon of a splendor rightly ruling  
Each rising and each setting 'neath the sun?  
What heed, the hates of Francis or his warfares?  
What heed, the machinations many a time  
Of England or the Paynim at the gates  
To fend, when with an all-imperial statehood  
And principalities earth-numberless  
Was I for praise and blame ripely endow'd  
A steward to an heavenly mastership?  
Yet was I foward, too man-blind to see  
And so accept the honor-withering flame  
Of Christ's new dispensation as it leap'd  
A lightning-tongue to my new age on earth;  
I was too knightly-proud (a Sigismund

## CHARLES V

With that Bohemian who came to nought  
Did better in his bitter perjury!),  
I was too prince-upright alway to allow  
Within the fox-skin of a Romish priest  
The real, infallible holy-fatherhood  
Whose guidance were unerring. Stood I forth  
Against desires of Clement, sack'd his Rome  
With soldiers of the brood of Wittenberg  
And flung in prison his person sacrosanct  
(In sin begot and crown'd in simony!)  
Or kept faith with a traitor to Christ's church:  
The same inestimable error made;  
The pride of individual kinglihood,  
The knight-on-oath, the manhood-chivalry  
Merely — when every tittle of human judgment,  
Of self-reliance 'gainst authority,  
Had rightly in God's vice-gerent drown'd away  
To rise above the flood of dim opinion  
(With fear of the shame of blushful Sigismund!)  
And maelstrom of the privy conscience-gleam  
To firmament and white, unfaltering light  
Of Christ-resolved perplexity, by rescript  
Indicted of the Pope-authority  
For sign of the new-born epoch upon earth

## POEMS OF PERSONALITY

(Obedience now in lieu of kinglihood)  
Releasing, overriding the mere troth-plight  
Of earthly knight and mundane Emperor!

O monk of Wittenberg, whose arms but now,  
Despite mine honor-prizing all-too dear,  
Drove me from Innsbruck to a foul disgrace,  
How have I taken thy part; in holding back  
The clouds of omen'd priest-craft-tyranny  
(So useful too in mine estates of Spain!)  
Brought down the deluge of a civil strife  
With victory to thy crime! Though thou be dead  
Too late to stay the damage of thy daring,  
Hearrest thou not in Hell (where I soon with thee  
May for my fatal frowardhood aye anguish!)  
The tramp of thy fiend-legions, I first loosed  
When for the right of conscience of a king  
I kept against a Pope's divine desire  
Mere oath and honor? I my soul had saved  
From everlasting torment; I the earth  
Preserved from everlasting sacrilege  
(May God through His new heirs yet intervene:  
My deep, dread, heartless son, my brother mighty!)  
Had I example set of absolute faith,

## CHARLES V

Endured disgrace, the private perjury  
Of burning thee in life as now thou burnest;  
And sacrificed my temporal fame to God:  
The dedication (which the times demand  
In their new culture of a tyranny  
To match rebellion) which I felt too dear  
Till now in vain! O monk of Wittenberg,  
Whose Hellish power perchance bewitch'd my spirit,  
A king even and an heart imperial  
Hath acted as by conscience-fealty,  
Thy motive in rebellion; and must feel  
(For honor lieth in God's authority!)  
How miserable the vast regrets of men!

## BACH

AN earnest piety preventeth me  
(Dear God! but there are moments of despair,  
As hours of exaltation verily!) —  
An earnest piety preventeth me,  
If I may meekly boast a grace of Christ,  
From trivial petulance. The patronage  
Of my respected prince enableth him  
Who serveth loyally the churchly muse  
To labor without fear of too strict want  
In effort toward the heights; undesignate  
Yielding his tongue to utterance sublime,  
So much as may be in the depths of him  
Half-inarticulate, without dismay.  
And can the servant of a favoring prince,  
Afforded with the daily provenance  
For family provision and the fees  
From funeral performance, crave of right  
Anything further — maintenance, reward  
Or recognition? For, behold! I brood  
Not quite in irony but realizing,  
If scarce with snug complacence, gratefully  
Indeed mine ease of fortune by God's help

## BACH

Assisting mine ambition to speak amply  
The music in me for acknowledgment  
Of heaven's favor! Shall not daily dole  
Suffice, with something of a shrewd respect  
From all less courtly folk, to crown the Court's  
Composer and Precentor of the School?  
'T is true that of the Bachs mine own success  
Is somewhat over average; that my name  
(In shame I smile, the fact perforce avowing!)  
Is gradually growing, sure I see,  
More widely known than any of my kin;  
Even as, maybe, my music richlier moveth  
Than music hitherto in homelier days  
Composed, perform'd of my Thuringian clan.  
And is not this enough of outward show;  
And comparable quite to my deserts,  
Sufficing to permit the spirit to sing  
Who in herself cares nothing for these things  
Save as the bodily life hath need of them?  
Mine organ and my clavichord apart  
Can take in idler hours from mine hand  
The meaning of mine heart which moveth me  
So much, so almost unaccountably  
With seeming-holy fervor; and in my work

## POEMS OF PERSONALITY

Which busies me by grant of God and man,  
God giveth satisfaction. Then, what more?

It is not that the pettier jealousies  
Of consistory or of scholars clash  
Too much with inspiration (an we call  
My yearning to compose in piety  
Church-themes an inspiration?) nor the cares  
Of many, many mouths given mine hearth  
For succor and support (my wife here yieldeth  
Help meet unto the need) cling me too close  
For freedom. These are things of human hate  
And human love, the common privilege  
Or burden, it may be, of all mankind  
Each man in sort; which, though they move me  
not

To wrath nor wantonness, yet endlessly,  
As I must feel in mine especial part  
And privacy of pure musicianhood,  
Contribute to a reverential zeal  
In service of a Love by sacrifice  
Triumphant over Hate: a service couch'd  
In sequent-harmonies canonical;  
Each tone, in yielding place, affording proof

## BACH

Of purport consonant, although diverse;  
And thereby passion pictured without pain  
Of self-reluctance in the yielding note;  
And thus a symbol of the art I'd owe,  
Its very image and presentment, given  
For stimulus within the daily round  
Which else had been, or fain had seem'd, at  
    surd

To mute mine utterance in soul's despite.  
That, though I picture Passion, no complaint  
(More than in Christ was personal complaint  
Though all in victory was yielded up!)  
Of petty cark, responsibility  
Nor any sort of hindrance, can arise  
Within my spirit whose natural pietism  
(I mean not any creed unorthodox!)  
By grace of God as I may meekly claim  
Preventeth, as I've said, all petulance  
Or derogation from humility;  
Whate'er the artist-irony, despair  
Or exaltation which may dwell therewith.  
Yet sometimes are there stirrings (very Christ  
Appeal'd unto the Father!) — might not God  
Achieve through music something of a truth,

## POEMS OF PERSONALITY

Some more replete harmoniousness, maybe,  
Which pettiness and privacy alike,  
For all the incessant motion of the mind  
And aggregation of the scriven'd sheaves  
Of the music-elemental culture-heat,  
Seem doom'd to smother; He working for the truth  
(As God through Luther work'd beyond the man  
Two centuries now since, unto all time!)  
In some way largelier, more to reach mankind  
(Haply my Mass may reach more creeds than  
mine!)  
With universal scope, than now by me;  
And yet I be His instrument, as now  
This organ is mine instrument of soul?  
Dear God! mine were Thy Power if so wouldst  
Thou  
Vouchsafe to me, the henchman of Thy song,  
A mission, universal angelhood,  
The masterful apostleship to lands  
Beyond our sunset lying or to times  
Franchised, enlighten'd far beyond these days  
Of niggard skepticism and the clouds  
Of creed-made tumult of the nations rent  
With bitterness of half-belief in Thee

## BACH

Its churchly, temporal establishments  
At variance each in jealousy! If Thou,  
Arrived at majesty in purports new,  
Wouldst let me speak when Christ were else a  
name

As for mistake and failure; to bring back  
The lost of Israel from their sands of cant  
By music of the cosmic fructifying  
Of Thy sphere-motions, as the years to-come  
Shall learn them for the thoughts within Thy mind  
Who veilest in all things else Thy Heart from man  
Save Law and architectured Harmony!  
Dear God! if Thou couldst let me know this glory  
Within me of futurity alarged,  
If only while I work and rear, for Thee  
Alone, the uplifts of an art no man  
Hath yet in understanding! Oh! for, God,  
I feel, if humbly, that within my moods  
And ways of counterpoint there lurk such forms  
Of intricate coincidence of tone  
As even favoring princes would contemn  
For reason of a novelty inborn  
(A Reformation, unconservative;  
Iconoclastic of mere piety!);

## POEMS OF PERSONALITY

Which subtler, curious thing of symphonies  
And chordal canonism will scarcely come,  
Confounding congregations, from the hand  
Of native impulse wholly without help  
Of public exploitation, as at Worms  
Men's mortal opposition brought to birth  
The appeal from self to God. Ah, if from God  
Be sympathy expected, it is well.  
And if to God be every hour appeal  
As now in anguish of the splendor-spirit  
His bounty puts upon me, it is well.  
But might not God reveal such sympathy,  
Accept and answer outwardly the appeal  
(Not only with the fees of funerals —  
Pardon the tragic irony of man! —  
Or birthday ode upon some paid command)  
In here and there insistence of a prince  
On better than the best, demand of men  
For fictions to confound a choiring throng?  
It sure may be that God Himself hath ways  
Of stimulation unperceived of him  
(Mine organ knoweth not the reason of it  
Though rendering right the urge of my soul!) —  
Of stimulation unperceived of him

## BACH

Who followeth the gleam and still appeals;  
Ways from within, yet also plausibly  
By help unseen without: the future age  
Which jealousies of churches generate,  
Wherewith all earth's at labor and whereto  
A man who loneliest strives may heart-attain  
And dwell with unaware? Did even he  
Incarcerate in Wartburg ever dream  
Of Germany enfranchised, celebrant  
As latterly, of his two hundred years?  
But, oh! the open conflict and the power  
Of emperies array'd against the man! —  
With me, a scholar or a consistory!

Nay, nay! I have spoken with God and He hath heard  
me  
Out of the mood of pietist despair  
And struggling exaltation ever mine!  
Nay, nay! There is a work unto mine hand  
Wherethrough a satisfaction and a sense  
Of universalism stimulating  
A soul fulfill'd, man's work unto mine hand  
In training of my sons (wherewith my wife  
Were more than merely helpful) and at school

## POEMS OF PERSONALITY

Some simpler truth to teach, passing adown  
The Bach tradition out of Thüringen.  
The Christ, the Luther, I may celebrate  
And please my prince; but from myself appeal  
Not publicly 'mid hostile emperies;  
Yet privily: leaving the rest to God!

## FICHTE

RISE up, rise up, O Teutons, and cast off  
The Corsican; from ashes of the soul  
Spring forth, fresh-Phœnix-like, and strike to ground  
The towering eagle! Be the nation born  
Of German folk to grasp a birthright-earth,  
The heritage of men! Assert our strength  
And claim to place in the sun! — But be there bounds  
To just ambition and to vaulting power  
A bourn of self-restraint: retrieving earth  
By virtue of men's mutual respect  
From these the shambles of the righteous strife,  
The terrible probation needed now.  
For, fellow-men, what saving were there made  
Of earth, if from the tyranny o'erthrown,  
The dragon's seed but of a fiery wrath  
Had birth and in our throes of sacrifice  
But strife and strife were bodied everywhile?  
Leap to the freedom-carnage — there is need!  
But hold within your hearts the brotherhood  
(My creed must teach it, an ye understand!)  
Of all who are, the stranger even as ye,  
Exponents of the Godhead! Feel the truth

## POEMS OF PERSONALITY

In absolute selfhood underlying each  
Of Gaul as Teuton! Fight, sith fight we must,  
The true war, slaughtering them the despot's hordes  
But that for Frankish as for German youth  
A new-enfranchised western neighbor-state  
Smile at ye o'er the Rhineland! Oh, what grief,  
Were once this splendid fervor of our folk  
For freedom and for opportunity,  
The wide world through, that spirit and spirit-truth  
(Mistake not strength of law for despotism;  
Well-knit, enlighten'd rule, for arrogant will!)  
In each establish'd state, self-regulate  
And neighbor-independent, overtly  
Alone should reign — what desecrating shame,  
Were this, the spirit-of-uplift in us now,  
Which my poor words assist in stirring-on,  
Were generous patriotism made the mask  
For furious world-subjection! Shall we fight  
Beyond the mountains of a German mark?  
No, never beyond the Rhineland save to serve  
The Frank by ruin of the despot there!  
Shall Germany enfranchised prove a yoke  
(A bitterer despotism than before)  
To Frank, Iberian — as this crew hath been

## FICHTE

Of him call'd Imperator — and blood-lust  
Inflame us to be scourge of half the earth,  
A second Hunnish plague of Attila?  
Far be it from us! Rather had my words  
Been smother'd in my throat, before their time  
Choked down ere utterance, than my battle-taunt  
Be taken for a cry of conquest here!  
Brethren and fellowmen! Your enemies  
Are fellows also. Let not Germany  
For dint of one good deed blot out in the end  
Heart-sense of wrong and right: as ill should be  
(Alas! as now I fear it of our fury!)  
Were sword and shot to be world's arbiters!  
Ah! vision of a justice beyond ours:  
Some overnational tribunal set  
(The national privacy alway preserving!),  
Some permanent conclave as of judges (each  
Race-representative, by rulers chosen)  
Arm'd only with the solemn treaty-oath  
(Unsmirchable in honor to a world!),  
Which no necessity could bid us break,  
Of nation each with nations; to submit  
Unto such rational arbitrament  
The burden of dispute: that thus our shares

## POEMS OF PERSONALITY

Were beaten out of swords, and reaping-hooks  
Be bent of spearheads; none be need of arms  
Save guarding a law and order national  
Against the evildoer! Thus, thus, o' troth,  
Liefer than in arbitrament of dread  
And death, were glory of our egohood  
Achieved. Ah, friends! I have through my best days  
(Who now by stress of tyrannies am driven  
To this high ranting, rousing up the land) —  
Through my best days have urged the inmost truth,  
Scarce as of revolution by the mob  
Nor as of conquest extra-national  
But, of a strength of order, holding fast  
For health domestic as for race-respect  
A peace, that universal spirit-hood  
Which binds all hearts together, keepeth faith  
By honor and by generosity  
Where oaths are (nay, where oaths are needed not  
For honor) between man and man, and holds  
One common intuition of God-kind  
For basis of achievement. If our souls,  
Each in its kind, must personally soar  
To splendor of privacy, oh, not by will  
Inflicted on the weaker but, by love

## FICHTE

In art, in poetry the master-mind  
(A Goethe, Schiller, surely sheweth ye!),  
Through cultural appreciation proven  
Shall ease him of ambition! If our souls  
Leap to the armament, O men, have care  
Of the future culture of men's brotherhood  
Which heeds well frontiers, in forbearance proud,  
Deals fairly with our common humanhead!  
Were it a dream-chimera? Must we choose  
Or such enslavement as the Corsican  
Hath planted on our necks; else or commit  
Our children and our children's children after  
To bitter armament, the frantic strife,  
The desperate overbearing? No! That crime,  
That world-crime worst against our fatherhood  
Be far from this the spirit-fatherland!  
And if bad hearts arise who would forget  
Man's common birthright of the absolute-soul  
Alike in each, 'soever otherwise  
Be tongue from tongue; and if they conquest cry  
And tyranny to desolated hearths  
(Where, brotherhood forgot, no fatherland  
Can claim a sonship) then to them turn ye,  
O generations, not with lackeying ear!

## POEMS OF PERSONALITY

But strongly daunt them with the reason-claim  
Of generous furtherance I teach ye now:  
I who must take, in all humility,  
This risk, of one who rouseth in men's hearts  
The tempest of an hatred, that it burn  
Too hot to be extinguish'd but may lie  
Forever smouldering, ah, flickering up  
(Which faith forefend!) with breath of policy  
And arrogant statecraft alway! — Yet be yours  
The claim of aspiration spiritual,  
The mission of emancipation now;  
Carrying not desolation but relief  
From burden; with the liberty of truth,  
The freedom each to dwell in liberty  
With truth for helpmate! Friends, the hour is come  
(Now stirs the splendid Slav's new-saving strength!  
The noble English, guardians of the seas,  
Hover with white-wing'd aid!) — the hour is come  
Of Germany's deliverance. Go ye forth;  
Smite once and greatly smite: and smite no more!

## SCHOPENHAUER

THE hour is bed-time; but the wine is good,  
Warming, yet almost wholly feverless.  
Yon viols sing-it soothingly, the 'winds'  
Not too asseverative tame their throats  
To moods in mystical complacency  
Of contemplation whilst my limbs repose  
Beneath their harmony and bask with them:  
The melody of prelude! And my heart  
Outreaches, takes (upon the stimulus  
Of symphony within me and without  
Releasing from long, nerve-rack'd harassment)  
Inceptions novel, tuned unto the taste  
Æsthetic of the momentary lapse  
From tension and from irritation. I turn  
No petulance now upon the pageant-thoughts  
Which dream-like muster in the lamplit air;  
Relaxing, I, to suave despondency  
Well-suited unto genius at research;  
The genius at research till haply wine  
With music lull to luxury of sleep  
Sans that bourgeois banality of bed  
And boorish night-cap. And in open'd book

## POEMS OF PERSONALITY

Which suits so well by sugar'd sonneting  
The melody of prelude, let me prick  
For phrase that fits, some text unto the tune  
Of thought : good reading matching the good wine.—

‘Music to hear, why hear I music sadly’,  
When all the yearning of the will of the world  
(The human burden-note, the nature-chord  
Supportant summing-up the cosmos-scheme),  
With scarce world’s anguish’d unreality  
Of intellect-presentment, sweetly speaks —  
Ay, sweetly speaks, despite objective taint  
Still archetypal of our misery —  
In music wholly and therein alone?  
Why sadly, when the will, as Will, were nought  
Hedonic? Were it that the intellect,  
Whereof perchance no auditor were purged  
(Oho! am I of intellect now purged,  
Who spur at truth-lists but in music’s name?)  
Nor musical creator quite exempt  
In exposition to art’s inwardness,  
Through some machinery of sense impinged  
In music as in aught else, outwardly  
Interprets and infuses with a tint

## SCHOPENHAUER

Of customary melancholy, taken  
From visual imaginations, e'en  
These tonal harmonies? Were it that we  
(Whose speech is alway wondrously betwixt  
Vision and voice, interpreting all insight!)  
In no sort may escape idealism  
Specific, individual in fine,  
Howe'er disguised as though beyond the self,  
Of the self-illusion? Though yon music make  
(Expressive overtly of nothing known)  
Appeal in uttermost not unto mind  
But unto will's impersonality,  
Warranted as by genus general,  
Architectonic o'er Platonic types,  
Of pure conatus in unconsciousness,  
Must self with sensitivity intrude  
(Sense, the sheer stuff, the raw material  
Of ideality, as Locke hath shown)  
To spoil all and announce with all life else  
The world-delusion and delinquency?  
Delinquent are we that the oracle  
Of will-reality (cause veritable  
E'en of curst consciousness) must yet, unreal  
(For so in last resort unreal is all

## POEMS OF PERSONALITY

Law-semblant definition 'neath the shroud  
Of space-and-time-form falsely causative —  
How quaint my Kant combined with Gautama,  
And yet profound beyond post-Kantian creeds  
Of shallow solipsistic optimism!),  
This pseudo-oracle of truth must yet  
Within our fantasy denominate  
Only the old illusion! How may we men  
Hear music to approve us feelingly,  
In the last freedom-effort of the heart,  
Of universal failure, lo! nor weep:  
Shamed of the sad insistence of the self;  
Alarm'd at life's incapability  
From life's illusions of a last escape?  
Alas! allowing to efficient will  
Some hope of nescience though the knower live,  
Through art (the form Platonic brought to earth  
Unwill'd save of the universal, felt  
As truth) in music have I dream'd escape  
(Music, the meaning of Pythagoras  
When measure, number was declared the key!),  
Hailing the hint of inarticulance  
(Involved in mere numericality ;  
And lack of literal allusiveness)

## SCHOPENHAUER

For will-reality, of poignancy  
Provided by conceptual emptiness  
In concentration on the immediate mood  
For unillusion, non-idealism —  
Mistaken in a fond interpreting;  
And feel now fervently mine hope betray'd,  
And nothing save illusion, no escape  
(Unless, as now, my nisus were appeased —  
Ah! surely scarce in dreadful suicide! —  
Ever in truth-perception geniuswise?),  
No escape granted to the sensuous man  
Wholly from unreality, allow'd  
Anywise from the world-embodiment.  
For even an hint, be it hint of what you please  
Beyond the mind (even Fichte, fool enough,  
Had sight of that!), implies yet consciousness;  
And form of space-perception dominates  
(Ha! Kant would have spared from space his moralism,  
But could not, as my doctrine plainly proves!)  
Still in the very “goal” of an “escape”.  
And I am sad while music mocks at me,  
Who face the universal failure with  
Discomfort of mistake and fair disproof!  
As I treat all men else, so now in turn

## POEMS OF PERSONALITY

Music makes sport of genius in my frame,  
Pronouncing error where was boastfulness.—  
Fain from disproof would genius be debarr'd!  
Fain would be proven genius in the adoption  
Of the very truth found so discomforting!  
Say, the new step be taken, from mistake  
Freed by the very burden of disproof,  
The spirit of genius saved bewilderment!  
Say, all is veil'd, one woof of misery,  
One warp of mystery and no escape  
(Nay, not in utmost generality  
Hyperplatonic of the objectivism)  
From intellect's insistence of idea;  
But most-abstraction lies but most remote  
(As Plato's truths were still beyond the world)  
From world-salvation merely and from truth,  
Not from our falsehood and unhappiness!  
Say, every loophole fancied of this life  
(Even the Oriental necromancy  
Of self-abstrusion, but approximately,  
Not fully liberative from the thrall)  
Stands stopp'd; and nought of any worldlessness,  
Abstractly counter to the pure idea,  
Pertaining to the will may be allow'd;

## SCHOPENHAUER

And very will-reality but names  
A central core, an accursed fundamēt  
(No thing-itself beyond our hedonism,  
But equally with ideality  
Topic of our despair as of delight)  
From which might be no dream of mere escape  
(Save genius be beyond bewilderment  
Delighting in the new-won estimate  
Of will-presentment, yea, of heart-idea?)  
For Maia and our self-bewildering!  
Then might I hear music less moodily  
Which yields at least such fundamental truth  
(For fundamental truth someway it seems  
Though more, perchance, akin to Locke than  
Kant—

Far be it from the Fichtean foolery,  
From Schelling's charlatanry, Hegel's hoax!)  
In proof of irretrievable dismay:  
By being truth, ay, despite the truth's dismay,  
None less a law whereof I were behoved  
(Where'er it lead and wheresoe'er derived  
If not from these Teutonic solipsists!)  
Best to be proud in the possession, not  
Cast down, below mere mundane melancholy,

## POEMS OF PERSONALITY

With feelingful oppression. For if world,  
As proved now by this music-maundering,  
Even in hyperplatonism (extreme  
Resort of objectivity) defy  
Our artist-effort from self-tanglement  
To free the world-will, even so must be  
Some principle of understanding, power  
Call'd forth in genius by the new demand  
Of comprehension in me that entails  
New explanation. Grant that music means  
Through utmost generality of art  
(Itself the hyper-art from mind remotest)  
In some sort most approximately will  
Clean of specific demarkation, world-will  
Without will-world's idealism, and thus  
(Spare me the Fichtean ego-inference!)  
Yields hint of plausible freedom from a thrall  
Of self-mistake, yet worst of all mistakes  
Would be to blind heart to the strength of sense  
So well descried of Locke and Kant alike,  
Which even in instance of a beauty blind,  
An art of tone sweetly unvisual,  
Envelopes if by symphony of sound  
With veil of miserable mystery.

## SCHOPENHAUER

And from mistake, searching the secret things  
For mastery, may genius be debarr'd!

Music to hear, so may I hear half-gladly  
Roused for the nonce from suave despondency  
As erstwhile from the accustom'd petulancies;  
And fearing only some misinference  
Too far toward Fichte in the strain'd revolt  
So sudden from the accustom'd Hinduism  
Of world-illusion and will-nescience!  
Music to hear, so may I hear half-gladly,  
By conscience of the hint contain'd of truth  
Unusual, revolutionizing to  
My doctrine, stimulating to the brain  
Of one half-stagnate with entirety  
(As none before me with entirety  
Save Leibniz, stagnant in a dogmatism;  
Or Berkeley, haply, whom the saving salt  
Of sane subjectivism could not cure  
Of Judaism's stale theology —  
Ay, or Spinoza, at the best half-Jew!),  
The brain lethargic with entirety  
Of hitherto conviction. From thought's first  
Inception of my system sprung full-arm'd

## POEMS OF PERSONALITY

From my young front (and few, I ween, so young  
Show'd thus mature!) hath small development,  
Save if by confirmation — and, o' troth,  
Hath all comparison with creeds extant  
Of Hindu, Greek or Modern but confirm'd  
My creed's superiority, till now  
My genius grasps a growth within itself  
Quite independent, as I stoutly swear,  
Unfecundate of chance resemblances  
To Fichte's superficiality  
My riper penetrations so abhor —  
From truth's first birth hath small development  
Save evidential testimony ensued  
To titillate intellect or require  
Of genius exercise. 'T was daily but  
The cataloguing of more instances  
(As Aristotle wasted stupidly  
Acumen too discursive citing facts  
As instances of species yet unproved,  
For all his logic categorical!)  
In proof of fundamental postulates  
Seemingly unassailable: the Will,  
The World-Presentment and the Pure Idea:  
A balance of the Two and Tertium Quid

## SCHOPENHAUER

Someway arising in the brain (conceived,  
Though feature of idea derivative  
And so in need of warrant with the rest,  
Yet mystically warranting the world  
By secret union of idea and will —  
*My circulus in demonstrando* — brain!);  
And within World-Presentment (properly  
Enough if, as it seems, Presentment be  
Perchance all of my system that survives  
Proof of sense-universal) elements  
Of subject-self, of object-otherhood,  
The true-face (saving that the private self  
Were presence!) and the false-face of a truth  
Intrinsically false in virtue of  
The double-faced subtension. Such it was:  
My world-solution; and therefrom derived  
The mystic purpose to annihilate  
Unto a world-salvation self and brain,  
The inward and the outward privacy  
Of individuation. But — at a gleam —  
This music, and this moodiness aware  
Of doubt and new denominations to  
The well-worn platitudes. And I have proved  
Myself, maybe (as erst all thinkers else

## POEMS OF PERSONALITY

By my critique!), in error; and take delight  
Strange in the sudden mockery of me  
(Might I endure it on another's tongue?)  
Which music hath induced. For, of a flash,  
I penetrate 'Arcanas all unguess'd'  
Derisively, anent the vaunted theme  
Of flawlessness to my philosophy  
Establishing counter-systems in a word:  
I pleased thereby both for the cynicism  
Of mine own goals-destroy'd and claims-decried  
And for the feel of power in the insight  
Of truth-perception fondly fresh-allow'd  
(Despite this warning to my dogmatism!)  
For fundament incontrovertible.  
'T is slight, the change of sight, and yet how vast  
The implication! Let me laugh (as might laugh  
Kant at those earlier dogmatisms destroy'd!)  
At recollection of the creed foregone  
A moment since! Where now were vague Idea  
(That echo of the falser Platonism  
Beyond the genus-truth) or, echoing Buddh  
With some extravagance, the vaguer Will?  
The concept of sheer consciousness, o' sooth,  
Supposed objective and sheer nescience

## SCHOPENHAUER

Supposed subjective (this the very Real,  
That the Ideal) conscience as of nought  
And nothingness unconscienced given to match  
Each void the other's vague inanity?  
With music for the password to prove both?  
Where now the music antinomial:  
Pure objectivity of nothing known,  
Pure nisus of a non-sense join'd within  
Tone-harmonies alone (for visual  
Imaginings, even of art, were still  
Recognized terms of ideality  
'Soe'er generic) tones excepted from  
Otherwise universal rule of self  
(Ah! how now shirk the Fichte-Schelling Self?)  
The hybrid and her world sensational  
Of mystery in mixture? Suddenly,  
The assertion of the modicum of sense  
(The sensuous fundament, heard or unheard)  
In tone-creation, of the parallel  
'Twixt voice and vision, and the paradox  
Melts into marvel that it e'er had seem'd  
Solution serious! Not one loophole left  
For any inkling of a meaning, in  
Experience the sole criterion, to

## POEMS OF PERSONALITY

Or selfless Will or objectless Idea;  
To Will pure Reäl, nor illusionism!  
But, in default of any severance,  
A somewhat which all theories would mean  
Which aim at unity and system, somewhat  
Perchance which others (might they be those three  
In chief I scoff'd at?) guess'd more close than I;  
Somewhat associant, identical  
With selfhood as with worldhood through and through  
For the true Reäl, where nought is beside  
For basis of deception, ay, for veil  
Of Maia I fondly featured: somewhat shown,  
No doubt, in some degree by all who seek  
Fair understanding as their genius leads:  
An union elemental through one system  
(Temporal-spatial, ay, essentially)  
Of subject-objecthood, of me and world  
Within my personal; with personal will  
For nexus of the worldhood-intellect;  
With personal intelligence providing  
(Not in an hyper-kind or genus-sort  
Conceptualwise, but primely by perception  
Interpreting unto self-purposes  
The other-selves provisional of sense)

## SCHOPENHAUER

The terms of selfhood's real assertiveness;  
And Person, compounded of idea and will  
Uniquely, for denominance of all.  
And, where in music thus the person takes  
(Scarce mythic Number of Pythagoras;  
Which were but time without time-consciousness!)  
Tone-interrelation felt discriminately  
Whilst cognized as of self hedonicwise  
By intimate mergence of these elements  
Of system recognized identical  
With world-self at expression (ay, reconstructed  
E'en in the auditor who, too, creates —  
If most by imitation), there finds the spirit  
True satisfaction, scarce as by escape  
From worldhood, not by nescience of the will  
Obliterate from ideality,  
But by world-realization outwardwise  
As inwardly opening intelligence  
To comprehension of the unioning,  
To nexus in extremes, to terminism  
In blind conatus; leaving nowise blind,  
Nowise mysterious nor illusional  
Nor veil'd of Maia, this our beauty-life  
Of reconciliation, opposites

## POEMS OF PERSONALITY

Inextricably, throughly polarized  
And constituting wholeness mutual.  
How vast the implication from this seed  
Of sense, this hint of solidarities  
(I care not though the ear hear silently,  
As now in momentary pause of sound;  
For inward speech itself is sensuous-based)  
Abiding even in music — sense itself  
But worldhood least-avowed as of the person  
(Most strict externalized in other-selves  
Themselves scarce held in self's heart-sympathy),  
Most unlike inwardness yet none the less  
In rudiment systematic: the last straw  
My drowning disrupt snatch'd at and was saved!  
So from mistake hath genius been debarr'd,  
Grateful for disproof by the music-mood.

Music to hear, thus hear I music gladly  
(E'en from the mythus of my Shakespear freed!);  
And from the gladness by irradial gleams  
Discover in all experiences else  
The tinge of satisfaction hitherto  
Quite undetected: that my pessimism  
Seems a lost shadow, and itself alone

## SCHOPENHAUER

Unreal, illusion'd. For where all is real  
Which to the personal will hath meaning, what  
Remains of old illusion yielding gloom  
For dint of unreality? Where life  
Is universal-mutual, what want  
Of pure Idea, to clear, as I conceived,  
The privy-wrought confusion; or what need  
For necromantic abnegation of  
A world proved truth organic? World and I  
Alike are mutual-necessary, each  
Essential, reäl with reality  
Identical in the inter-reference,  
Sufficing to criterion of an whole;  
And so are warrantable each by each,  
And thus a living music! — Yet, ah! how weary  
The ear, now, at such stress irrelevant  
Of yonder loud expulsion from the brass  
Of booming-breath'd vibration! With what snarl,  
Irritant to attentive petulance  
Startled as out of prophecies in sleep,  
Attest the viols their complainingness!  
Ha! 't is a weary business, this of earth,  
Sans all Arcanas worth the dreaming of;  
A wear-and-tear without or let or cease

## POEMS OF PERSONALITY

Of each on other; sight or sound alike  
(Even speech-thought, of both made up in base)  
Only some friction of the jaded nerve!  
*À-bas*, the foolish jest of joust for truth  
When merely living is a strife enough!  
Nought without sheer sensation! Oh, there crowds  
In on the ruffled spirit such a storm,  
Outraging genius in its inwardness,  
Of interruptions and irrelevancies!  
No heart-escape! No thwarting such a will  
Inveigled in its cage inextricably  
To crowd and jar, to push and be rebuff'd  
The livelong eons of vulgarity  
(Humanity and nature bourgeois both;  
Whether supportant or at odds, what care?)  
Call'd cosmos! Ah! would but the courage stick,  
How swift I'd cheat things of their sport of me,  
Checking their mockery with proud report  
Of how I dared the nobler self-escape,  
Destroy'd out of the world my saviorhood  
Of wisdom scarce-appreciated: so  
Abandoning their world-will to its fate!  
Ah, well! I dare not. 'T is a question closed  
And seal'd with doctrine how the true escape,

## SCHOPENHAUER

Easy enough by contrast, were not death  
But life's continuance in some will-less mood  
(Possible to the ascetic saint, no doubt)  
Of vacant contemplation! — Well, for me  
Here was a will-wan mood æsthetical  
(Born of a chance phrase in a much-thumb'd book  
Which now I snap-to, pocket testily)  
With contemplation but not vacantness;  
With fantasy of Fichtean folly — faugh!  
Yon breath in the brass, yon poignance of the strings  
May seek and find escape, forsooth. But I,  
My sad limbs stiff with these unyielding stools,  
Surfeited now with music can but pay  
Their stupid reckoning. — How much for bad wine?  
Bah! 't is too dear! — And so am off to bed.

## LINCOLN

THE people shall be trusted. Strong, though sad,  
In confidence I must announce the truth:  
Defeat, disruption of the nation now,  
The disappearance from the face of earth  
Of high democracy and government  
By the people for the people evermore,  
Now and forever — save the people come  
Equally from all sorts in sacrifice  
Of national service to the service-line,  
With common blood unto the bloody front,  
And face in absolute democracy  
The time's necessity. For hitherto  
Have but the bravest and the best stepp'd forth  
To strip for freedom's ringside, leaving all  
Of home and comfort and of life-career  
Because a patriotism upsprung within,  
A public duty felt and speaking in them  
Prevail'd above all selfish obstacle  
And drove them by compulsion of the soul,  
By conscience to the terrible battle-front.  
And this, despite democracy supposed,  
Was worse than aristocracy; the best

## LINCOLN

But flung in the breach. And of the best there be not  
Enough to stem the tides of slavery;  
Nor Union to posterity bequeath.  
Yea, can democracy and liberty never  
Turn to the world the trick of victory  
Won and the right establish'd, save the crowd  
(At heart too proud to cower beneath the shield  
Of nobler natures) find in the fight at last  
Their manhood and salvation, nobly dying  
Where need is to make life nobler to live.  
The people, if to learn to find their life,  
Must be compell'd and at the dire need  
Trusted to take equality of pain.

Equality of pain! Is that then all?  
Or truly first when sacrifice is shared  
Springs brotherhood? Shall I, the solitary,  
So sorely friendless at the nation's head,  
So nigh-unaided in its counsellings,  
By Providence compell'd to every task  
Of leadership alone (and so companion'd,  
At worst, of Providence!), in taking on me  
The terrible responsibilities  
Now of the draft-conscription to make men

## POEMS OF PERSONALITY

Follow by sheer compulsion, not myself  
At last, and for the first in verity,  
Feel kinships and the strength of sympathies  
With every man within the nation's bound  
Who serves and learns to love beyond aught else  
His country, that profound community  
Of purpose to set freedom everywhere  
Above compulsion in the hearts of men?  
Strange, bitter-sad the purgative of God,  
That they and I can only thus be free  
And free of a common aim in sacrifice  
By such compulsion: I, compelling me  
To take upon my heart the infinite burden  
Prescribed to the conscience as by Providence  
Of forcing to the shambles brother-men;  
But, thereby only, winning victory  
And, thereby only, feeling brotherhood  
Complete and innocence of tyranny  
In the friendship of the faith that trusteth men  
To learn the deep disaster to our faith,  
To share with me the secret that there be not  
Of best enough to save the earth for good. —  
O Lord, couldst Thou, with malice unto none  
And charity toward all, singly prevail

## LINCOLN

By Thy high sacrifice; yet of mankind  
No heart and soul prevail, 'soe'er high-placed  
In men's preferment to the post of toil  
And power that is responsibility,  
No single will assume vicarious  
The sacrifice, unless in leading now  
All wills alike to yield with him their life  
(For high resolve how none in vain shall die  
Of them who, of the best, have fought and bled)  
In immolation to the common weal?  
Yet who of men did ever learn of Thee  
Except through sacrifice? And this I bear,  
This burden of compulsion over men,  
The nearest is and dearest at the heart,  
Most like religion to democracy,  
Most like a crucifixion in my spirit  
Of freedom, that it wholly rise again. —  
I trust the people. Though my trust compel.

## WAGNER

To them there is nothing plain till noon hath waned  
On the deed: they could not learn though I might  
teach them;  
For wonted things alone they can conceive.  
Whereas my spirit broods in the womb of dawn  
On things not yet brought forth. Some sword they  
need  
Of hero whom their gods have never help'd  
(The shatter'd sword which wants a forging-heat),  
A heart not bound in everlasting law,  
But fashioner of rule beyond their gods'  
Walhalla fall'n in ruin! For he alone,  
Heart-plunged in furnace of the welding world  
By stroke on stroke fresh-forged unto the times  
Were fit for deed which no god-kind can do,  
Remote, estranged from the onward strength of men:  
Deed which, but for the sake of gods or men,  
Some Siegmund must befather! But they are nought  
(Save only Liszt and Ludwig and a few!),  
Inept to understand though all my mind  
And heart and power of soul were flung before them  
In music-pearls 'neath hoofs of the Hagen-herd!

## WAGNER

The Hagen-herd who, hating, yet support  
The gods of old by hating more the hero;  
And, murdering him, had balk'd both men and gods!  
Ah! Wotan! Wotan! thou at worst spak'st truth,  
Though wrath inflamed thee with desire to break  
Laws of thine own devising; though thy god-spouse,  
Mere Fricka, frantic with the wrongs which Earth  
Had wrought her by concubinage with thee  
Change-fertile, Fricka, conservatrix still  
Of canon, flaunted in thy face the rule  
Of god-whim everlasting! But the lust-taunt  
Inspired thee, pluck'd indeed from thy dull'd eye  
(Clouded by that for which its mate thou pledgedst!)  
The wisdom of the ages and allow'd  
Insight prophetic of futurity!

For thou, O Wotan, with the swine who, for  
The hate that is in them to the hero, laud thee  
(These sycophants of canons classical)  
Art pass'd: mightily pass'd and grandly so,  
My soul avows; but, pass'd beyond all help  
Save music of our humankind to-come  
More than re-youth thee! May the true gods of song  
Not fail in twilight sith tomorrow's dawn

## POEMS OF PERSONALITY

Hath gleam'd to a dayburst in the speech of me:  
Song aye and song, though every critic flout  
The flame-rush of me; though my every word  
Deny, destroy the modes their morbid sense  
Craves to its slumberous soothing!— Rouse and wake,  
Thou fire-maid of my wish; that, greatly daring,  
My heart, the unfamiliar of a fear,  
Espouse thee and upon the morning-heights  
Mouth to thy glory and splendor music free  
And formulable but to the fashioning  
Of the fearless bride-pair, me and thee, high maid!  
And if, at end, over mine ashes roll  
The green and deep tumultuous-pulsing Rhine  
Of foam-new melodies, of harmonies  
Snow-born of the mountains of a thousand dawns  
And rhythmic passionings beyond the ken  
Of aught now swirling in me; need the bright sun  
Of this awakening heart to heart with thee,  
Brünnhilde, mourn thy love for wasted, lost:  
That thou with me — my funeral pyre of hope! —  
Perishest and thine ashes with mine own  
Sweep to an ocean of antiquity  
Where both were nigh forgotten? Shall the wind  
Of world-arousing in our challenge-horn

## WAGNER

Echo in vain along the streaming crags  
For that this magic cirque which binds us twain  
Sinks to the glimmering depths; and bodeth silence?  
Silence? Nay, love! I never swerved from thee  
Nor thee insulted for the draught bedrugg'd  
Of lips'-applause, success ephemeral,  
Fetching thee from thy fastness down to them:  
Despite the sorry saga. And not then  
When death hath stopp'd my tongue (and posthumous  
The tone-child waxeth) not then at the last  
Need silence (still-birth of clangor troth-betraying,  
Harsh-hearted) seal our lips of concord-faith:  
Concord of union though the world misjudge  
With allegation of horn-dissonance!  
For, to the ages though my tongue be stopp'd,  
Shall this our ring from out the glimmering Rhine  
Greenly and gloriously emit the light  
Of gold, pure gold: that all Rhine-seas of song,  
Melodious-molten in the weltering wave,  
Yield back unto the sun at evening as  
At morning (ay, as now) a power of faith  
Enarm'd — as now with shield and helm of proof  
Aloft upon our wonder-rock sing we:  
Sing we, aloft upon our morning-peak

## POEMS OF PERSONALITY

Which giveth back the sun unseen below,  
Laws everlasting to the realm of song  
Tumultuous, mountainous of passioning,  
New and eternal new-eternally;  
Godship beyond inheritance o' the gods!—  
But they, though I might teach them, could not learn!

But, ah! dear maid! this Siegfried of thy faith  
(Sudden, by pause of jubilation in me  
For empty hearkening world's echoless void;  
Myself estranged from the onward strength of men  
And, all too soon, myself the god-apart:  
Still as to-day no recognition sponsors  
In critic-mind the mystic challenge-round!) —  
Dear maid! alas, this Siegfried of thy faith  
(Disown'd of the lives who bore too lonely  
The man-birth by their death in parentage!)  
I feel, o' sooth, within the rolling Rhine  
Of ages got of this, in ashes strewn  
Abroad upon oblivion, the ring:  
For all its unalloy, yet time-debased,  
Revenged of time for that I outraged eld  
Who stole the hoard by slaughter, scarce for grace  
Derived of gods by whom I seem'd cast off

## WAGNER

Acceptive of the moulded yielden gift! —  
The ring, made mine of force unhallow'dly  
(Scarce felt for an inheritance from them  
Whose godship came anew to godship in me)  
Forever hidden in the hollow'd grot  
Of some subaqueous enchantment, lost:  
Maugre all purity of vaunted wonder  
And flawlessness from gods' obliquity! —  
Lost out of life as out of life was lost  
Each dwarf or monster of the brood of earth  
Who erst had owed it and whom my sword displaced  
By brutal dispossession! For no father  
Nurtured me; and my foster-nurses e'en,  
'Soe'er admired o' the callow forest-youth,  
My muse hath curtly slain. And thy loved self,  
Too privily debarr'd inheritance  
Of thy warfather's world-publicity  
And power effective (thou, my secret heir  
To Walhall's domination, yet by me  
Unowned for god-inheritress!), thy voice,  
Thy desolated voice denied of men!  
Alas, for the hero, mightiest music-mind  
And mate of inspiration though he be!  
Alas! for him who (though the philtre-cup

## POEMS OF PERSONALITY

Of fate excuse him!) thwarts the marriage-plan  
Establish'd of an art's propriety,  
Of social usage and precedence given;  
Who, deputy but of authority  
To bear the mystic bride unto her king  
His master, yet, intoxicate with draught  
Of private joy in self-despairing strength  
Autonomous, enamoureth thereby!  
How Tristan-like he lieth, lingering long  
In agony of wanting, with the wound  
Of inexpressible artist-anguish tortured,  
The wound of the world whose wisdom he has wrong'd:  
The wound his mad hand opens mortally!  
Whilst thou but in his yearning (of the sense  
Scarce-recognised), uncuring of the smart  
Mayest soothe at best, for all thy hastening hither,  
Only in bitterest anticipation  
Of parting, the frenzied pulse-beat with thy voice;  
And in thy coming doomest Kurwenal,  
Dragg'st down King Mark with weight of friendship  
    fell'd:  
The Liszt, the Ludwig harm'd by faith in me!  
Thou hastest, doubtless, from earth's farthest confines  
To be with him at the last, attest thy faith

## WAGNER

And hearten him unto death's proof-avow'd  
Of uttermost failure! O'er the genius-corpse  
Thy life, too late arrived in the battled bark,  
Thine own life, how it mourns him, with what sound  
Most heaven-searchingly thy high swan-song  
Announces from thy soul-abandonment  
Still greatly true, faith-dignified in death,  
The world-release heart-tragic absolutely  
In ultimate annihilation ended  
Of every dream'd-on life-accomplishment.  
And where thou, pure Isolde, meltst down,  
An obsolescence and antiquity,  
Athwart the corpse of thy creative love;  
There he, the hero, doubly lies forgot  
(Lost out of thee as thou from the world art lost!);  
And all is as though love had never been;  
As though the spirit of music had not waked,  
Not even to the lust that wrong'd the world,  
The flux that flouted formulæ foregone  
And taunted sane convention! And now I come  
(The private passion, the secret love forsworn)  
To music-reconstruction, the master-singing  
(By dawn upon their wonted things of noon;  
Not night-annihilative but, resurgent!)

## POEMS OF PERSONALITY

Of critical tradition re-enthused  
With intimate artistry impassionate!  
And in the reconstruction shall I teach them  
(Not as by pearls to swine but, in communion  
With what of godship ever was to them,  
As through this friendship of a Liszt, a Ludwig!)  
By speech still sane: that they shall understand!

Yet, soft! This master-singing! Let it echo  
Never so nobly with the social strength  
Of artist-organizing, yet what depth  
Of paradox, of difficult dismay  
Unto the private spirit which creates  
Such enterprise entaileth! How enthuse  
With intimate artistry impassionate  
Their music of the academic law?  
The very anti-art of formalism  
Revive in mine own person (though forsworn  
Be music-revolution!) unto proof  
Of radiant beauty undeniable?  
Though I abjure the fight, may I adopt  
(As now attempted in my comedy  
So close to score-completion) wantonwise  
The school-traditional authority

## WAGNER

As prentice still; yet turn my poetizing  
(Avoidantly serene, untragical  
Of purport as of world's reception too!)  
Beyond all praise or test, to breathing form  
Perfectly self-demonstrative by note  
On note of meaningful proportion, chosen  
Tune-spontaneity and reasoning  
Wonder: the song of songs and melody  
Of sheer melodiousness? How play the god-part  
Of personless creation, contentful  
Yet whole, emotion'd yet of filial calm,  
Proud but in piety, though heroical;  
Presentative of men and women aye  
Responsible, humanely as though godlike  
And yet exempt from magic fate-commands,  
Self-prized yet prize-compelling: when the man  
Must crown the archaism he dethrones,  
If aught's to be achieved of fruitfulness  
In beauty seeded through the minds of men: ^  
Men's necessary minds, still stupidly  
(Save only Liszt and Ludwig of my heartstrings!)  
Demanding demonstration of the art  
In truth-terms academic, whilst decrying  
Art's demonstration of truth-novelty?

## POEMS OF PERSONALITY

For so the gods must prove allwise the world  
And Walhall-everlasting be the times'  
Onrush; and art, of art conservative,  
For all its alteration: conserving but  
As by renunciation of the best  
And disavowal of the limit-goal  
Of fancy-freed achievement, gaining all! —  
Thus, thus alone, by truth-relinquishment  
As truth were privily ideal, reaches  
(With calm of heart and vision of such end  
To hopes of self-achievement) the sick soul  
A peace beyond all peradventure, peace  
(Curing the wound of wanting and world-sin)  
Of Holy Grail descended from above  
On him who, thus renouncing not alone  
The storm and stress but therewith overtly  
All bourn of person'd impress on the times  
(Unlike that Siegfried who apostatized  
His singleness of mission, yet was slain!  
Ay, Lohengrin-like; though, deeper, Parsifal:  
Scarce by withdrawal but, by entering in!),  
Accepts the song-succession, the soft light  
Of loftier than Walhall streaming down  
Out of the dome of harmonies vouchsafed

## WAGNER

In solemn onward rhythmic tongue of bell.  
The gods of song have help'd indeed the hero  
Who, by self-abnegation of all aim  
(Mayhap my Liszt, my Ludwig feel this in me  
Maugre my seeming-egotist despairs?)  
Save reverent consecration, takes the bowl  
Of blood belovèd 'twixt the hands of him  
For consecration and for sacrifice,  
To bless, release and rectify the truth,  
Not in defiance, heart-tumultuously,  
Nor with the hope of life-eternal here  
Unless 'in Christ', successive in the whole  
Of endless presence through the temporal stream;  
By past-to-come absolved, resolved through prayer;  
Healing not as by magic but release  
From untoward interruption: through the grasping  
Of weapons hurl'd transforming them to balm;  
Scarce by avoidance, all-responsibly  
Savior by pity, sympathizing still  
With gods, progenitors wherfrom derived,  
And marvel-ways of obsolescence; so  
Successor-conservator militant  
By spirit-classicism; saint approved  
By generosity, yielding to art

## POEMS OF PERSONALITY

Because of reverence and self-despite  
A canon as by insight-innocence,  
By art-religion and law-mystery  
Now understood, unlock'd with heart-key to it:  
Not liable to love-death nor disown'd  
Of any seas of song horizon-broad  
Which bear within their wave the wonder-ring  
And need not waft a troth-betraying bride  
Too late to him who dieth of the law!  
For such an one as he, this Parsifal,  
Now waxing in me with acceptance of  
The mission of succession beautiful  
In order from the earliest, such as he  
(Enlighten'd not by fairy speech of bird  
From forest-ignorance to hero-lore  
But, by the power of soul-significance  
Enfranchised through envisagement of sin!)  
Stands help'd of the gracious gods and founding them  
More surely in Walhalla mountain-rear'd  
By every humbler utterance. — Come we, then,  
Companions of my stress and storm, Isold',  
Brünnhilde, maids of mine imagining  
(Ah! Kundry, your fallen sister, can but die;  
Yet dies renew'd: old failures art-redeem'd!);

## WAGNER

And learn how scions are we of the gods,  
God-help'd and helping! Come ye, hand in hand!  
The morning is upon the lands of song  
Because the nights have been and ancient dawns  
Have touch'd ere now the snow-peaks with their beams!  
With reverent look and downcast tread ye soft  
The porch of the temple: come, and enter in!  
Hark ye the bell and lay ye by the horn.  
Heed well the wealth of marvel o'er your heads;  
And, sinking here in prayer with me, at last  
Achieve, renouncing; teach, if teach ye will,  
By fellowship. Ah! eating of the bread  
Of healing sympathy, learn we the world!

## GLADSTONE

How genuine, Lord! our immaturity!  
With what conviction is our life begun  
And final purpose; though the full career  
Proves no conviction final and our end  
Yearning but onward! If the life-span stretch'd  
E'en to millennia, not the scant three-score  
And seven of mine hour vouchsafed by Thee —  
E'en to millennia, yet maturity  
Were reach'd, if anywise within man's reach, ,  
Not as a wakening from a dream of youth  
To ripe realities then first achieved  
But, mainly as a gathering-up of years  
Past and of prior powers effectual  
To the force of the moment and the purpose of it,  
Sans prejudice to After or Before!  
Yea, Lord! how otherwise the work began  
In earnest conservation; and thereon  
How earnest ('neath Thy guidance) the reform,  
The reconstruction root and branch with hope  
Of conservation only by the more  
Laying the axe to the root for England's weal!  
And yet how true the first sincerity,

## GLADSTONE

How genuine the early agencies  
Each at the need of the day; and now how strong  
The inward urge, under guidance of Thee,  
Toward one stroke more (inglorious ease postponed)  
Unlike aught hitherto (save Italy,  
My propaganda for a freedom there,  
Yield hint of a beginning) and yet impell'd  
Both by sincerity of ethic need,  
The thrill of a duty to denounce the Turk  
In his unspeakable atrocity,  
The thrill of moral need which ever urged me,  
Quick'ning in me the mood of veriest youth;  
Whilst, wise by retrospect of divers causes  
Each in its turn mine oriflamme, no longer  
Expecting in the work finality  
Nor after-conservation (England lapsing  
Perchance to Ottoman policy anew,  
Though wiser than if not now aroused)  
But claiming only for the hourly need  
The fair, the fitting; and a work-of-youth  
Brave in its passing consequence, sincere  
In proud-admitted immaturity!  
Lord! at the outset of a championing  
(Well-nigh unaided in a grim old-age)

## POEMS OF PERSONALITY

Which leads no man knows whither, let me lead  
My mind in solitude within this church  
Of Hawarden, whithersoever in Thy wisdom  
The mind of man may wander reverently!

For, lo! we leave behind us not a youth  
Inane nor self-deluded. For our youth  
(Whether conservative, ay, or radical —  
And, either way, there were good reason for it!)  
In all that makes for man-maturity  
(This surety that no wisdom were mature!)  
And worthiness unto the work of earth  
Lasts on, the only way may aught last on,  
In the consequence, resurgence of our power,  
By virtue of life's evolving moral need,  
Of self-conviction; if with ever more  
Contrast of past convictions so contain'd, ;  
Even by such cumulation thus but more  
With genuineness of the years-outlived  
And prospect of a real accomplishment  
In stimulation of a further purport  
Purposed, equipp'd and arsenal'd. — The singer  
Of Troy heroic, though to these our times  
A boy in glory of outburst, glories yet

## GLADSTONE

These problems of our boyhood's overplus  
(These councils of the chiefs, these kindling fires  
Of nation-wide uprising, as I trust —  
Spare Troy the poison'd parallel of Turk!):  
Sincerity (and with vision of the whole,  
A sense of ethic need ennobling man!)  
Streaming, illuminating, from the page  
I oft have pored-on, in a secular mood,  
For uplift in the turmoil and the labor  
With splendor of application to our times;  
Although but primitively hand-to-hand  
The contest, crude the counsel of the clans  
And wanting much in high morality  
Their elemental gods. Ah, God, Thy Book  
Of patriarchal, mild simplicities  
(Not lacking, too, in strenuous interlude!)  
Were loftier, sith inspired! Yet for me now  
(Who want a youth, not three-score years and seven,  
Wherewith to kindle England!) in Thy Homer  
Upwells an inspiration verily  
Anent the moment! For the youth of the world  
(That phrase, *Juventus Mundi*, still it thrills me!)  
Is his indeed. And of the youth of the world  
That which was loftiest, the incitement of it,

## POEMS OF PERSONALITY

Ambition for achievement in the best  
And boon of brave belief must bide in us,  
Respond and echo from the brave-born soul  
Of modern man, who (bearing burdens felt  
For world-wide in our policies, for fraught  
With spirit-problems sprung of the history  
Of thrice-millennium since Ajax' hour)  
Evolves, outlasts the earlier spirit-pose  
Ever to new conviction! I am come  
(O God, the splendid pain of change at heart!)  
Through many an alteration of my judgment,  
Through many a refutation inmostly  
Of confident assurance. But remain  
Like Homer (like Ulysses of the bard  
Now long our laureate) unskeptic still,  
Believing in Thy truth and action through it —  
Though someway the conviction may not rest  
But by its very operation alters  
The disposition of environment  
Which gave to faith vocation! Ah, may not faith  
(Under Thy prompting, Lord, if it may be)  
With incident operation, based therein  
And so expressive of the inmost man,  
Itself half-poetwise create for man

## GLADSTONE

Whether for others also or oneself  
(Ay, who would wait to find majorities  
Before conviction and a founding of them?)  
The fresh truth-disposition; and be faith  
Coincident with truth from hour to hour  
Alone by permanent power within the faith  
Through function to establish ever further  
The whelming consequence and yearn thereto?  
How have I, with this Homer in my veins,  
Strode on from aim to aim, from youth-belief  
To man-belief and man-belief anew,  
Yet ever couraged and convinced afresh  
Where critics well have carp'd upon the change  
Crying for craven act-consistency  
Where ever only wax'd consistency  
Of consequence and growth to lead men on  
Unto the making of a new fact-form  
Whence newer needs and new convictions spring  
More warrantable mainly than the old  
Because by will to truth contributive!  
Ah, had I been the charlatan (perchance  
One such there were in England's councils now  
Predominant, imperative?), sincere  
In nought than shrewd time-serving, then had I

## POEMS OF PERSONALITY

Deserved the censure, where from moods without  
Of divers men and things alone the warrant  
Had for the alter'd action e'er accrued:  
No faith to gripe a growth-congruity  
In leading ever onward, in altering all  
Of truth-interpreted to fit the faith  
And thereupon in operation posing  
(Not by a passive self-subjection 'neath  
A nature's chance-selecting but, creative!)  
The disposition of environment  
To suit the new-born purpose as it may!  
How false, had I not youth and Homer in me!  
How sad, were faith not, in these things of earth,  
The court of last appeal; and poetry—  
The making-over of experience  
In vision of a virtue not (to sense  
Immediate and to chronicle) its own  
But spirit-inward — with efficiency  
The type of man's supreme prerogative  
Of founding to the image of his soul  
The future out of past accumulation!  
For, with mine Homer in me, youth of the world  
Upwelling though I grew but to the grave,  
Were growth not merely life's compelling rule

## GLADSTONE,

(So Darwin in his simpler cynicism)  
Enforced in blindness on reluctant clay,  
But life's great glory of a poetry,  
A demigodship of the living soul,  
An high Olympianism of the man,  
A proud impulsion spiritual within,  
Whether 'mid Senates of the mightiest realms  
Or stilly in self-searching privacy  
As now with Thee, O Lord, in Hawarden church:  
From within outward to make all things new  
(By conservation of the older things  
Their leading gradual, self-development)  
And doubt not — more than need be for our  
sight  
Imperfect and our knowledge half-at-fault,  
Our reverence for the practice-tested past  
As standard of a truth time-reconciled;  
And basing confidence in the poet-soul,  
The youth which visions through maturity  
An immaturity, an innocence  
Of unfulfill'd adjustment if they will,  
Which needs not life-eternal to achieve,  
Nor immemorial monuments to prove  
A presence now by foresight to the years

## POEMS OF PERSONALITY

In work's effect though all our works are found  
Imperfect to tomorrow's artistry!

O God, art Thou the One that doth not change;  
And yet Thy works (as immanent in man's,  
Evidenced in the puppets of Thy power)  
All, all at change, based in a fact of faith  
Alone which changeth not through every hour?  
O God, art Thou then Faith and only Faith,  
This warrant of earth-things which changeth not,  
But nought beside of earthly incidence?  
Or rather in every operation changing  
Sofar as Thou in these creation-acts  
Call'd man's art ultimately Poet-God:  
An O'er-Olympian ever amid men  
Concern'd and greatly fighting the good fight?  
Shall men pretend that any Godliness  
Abides our question (ay, or should abide —  
For, lo! no coward skepticism here,  
No cheap agnosticism waiving creed!)  
Save as the search is answer'd hourly  
Just in the youth, the reverent conviction,  
The faith-at-application constantly,  
The continuity of heart sincere

## GLADSTONE

Which men may labor in and be at peace?  
Art Thou then Youth of the World; Who, opening out  
Thy self-unfolding never didst enfold  
Until the unfolding that which seems to hide  
Yet hid not; Thine all-immaturity  
Poetic at creation evermore  
Genuine in the making of Thyself?  
And as we go into the grave dost Thou  
As we have known Thee also truly die  
Though resurrection be Thy youth-of-the-hour?  
These very questions Thou art answering  
Not every hour alike, butifferingly  
If alway truly to each differing faith:  
Mine own in this brief moment of communing  
Startling the depths that in my thought of Thee  
Had hitherto in seeming slept unchanged,  
And truly slept unchanged till, wakening now,  
Their very wakening stirreth, through the past,  
A power at work within them dimly there  
To mould a world-foundation, cast a faith  
Which even as a faith hath not remain'd  
A faith in faith-unchanging nor a youth  
Of aging unaware! For deeds of youth  
Were trick'd with a purpose haply to endure

## POEMS OF PERSONALITY

(Though altering the hitherto-endured  
If but by such factitious conservation!)  
Unalter'd in intention whatsoe'er  
The change and chance which might ensue thereon.  
But now, with thanks to Thee that I have found  
An organon of faith pragmatical  
Enheartening in me my loneliness —  
Yea, now I recognize the righteousness  
Of unguess'd alterations; and desire  
Not that the impact of the hourly blow  
Shall echo to the ages my mere meaning,  
The hope for the Cause, for victory, that is mine  
When struggling for achievement presently;  
But all be fluid (even Thy Church-and-State  
As Turk or Balkan) with the fact of faith  
In the retrocession: fluid, save as this fulness  
Of comprehension of a temporal scheme  
(Not for concealing truth but for revealing)  
Which understands and holds at every hour  
The apprehended vistas infinite;  
Themselves, as apprehended instantly,  
Not subject to retraction, to holding-on  
Nor ripe anticipation; and thus affording  
The ultimate truth-standard though at each

## GLADSTONE

Infinite instant in a truth and faith  
Unique unto the hourly task at hand;  
Themselves (in proof of such uniqueness felt  
Of him who labors) rectifying earth  
As in him lies by power of such a youth —  
The vistas apprehended proving him  
An Homer, biding poetwise despite  
The crudity discover'd, the vainglory  
(Yet victory still were truth's prerequisite!)  
Of combat hand-to-hand for victory,  
The spoliation, or the wantonness  
Of godhood more contemptible than man  
Because more capable in cruelty!  
Ah! may such Youth of the World be in my work,  
Lord, as Thine inspiration though I fail;  
Leading this England on, far to outstrip  
The uttermost reforms of this mine age:  
A world-poetic of a Poet-God  
Appreciating as it proves them false  
These old-age ethnic liberalities:  
As it turns and smiles at them; and feels their power!

## BRAHMS

O BLEST conservatism of human minds;  
O reverence for the mighty who have been  
And who by splendor of the truth have told  
A satisfaction everlasting!  
O spirit of classicism in our souls  
And admiration of the proven path: ]  
Precluding all iconoclastic zeal  
Within me as I set me to my song!  
What peace, what pure support from by-gone powers  
Avow'd, beyond mine hour's prevision, pour'd  
Over and through this fever of the heart  
Which starts the tone-blood tingling innerly!  
What noblest vistas of achievements past  
Now poised above the onlook; and within  
The very music-flood of wave and wave,  
Of throb and throb of this so passionate voice,  
What deep-reflective, channel'd imagery  
Ordering, regulating, holding wise,  
Articulate and rhythmic-logical  
The rhapsodies of elemental mood!  
No loss of voice direct; with, oh, what gain  
Of mastery in the tone-material,

## BRAHMS

In context of the screed and history  
Of art's own growth to prove the truth for new:  
By just this solemn sense of splendid Bach,  
Mozart of unimpeded purity,  
Beethoven glorious for a canon given,  
A method and a tried maturity!

How other than the wildness of romance  
Which they of the half-insanity (untaught,  
As 't were, of all mistakes, all axioms too,  
Known to the humbler scholar) boldly laud;  
Whom instinct only guides and draweth on,  
Whom hatred of the past alone impels  
And crude contempt for masterhoods achieved —  
Blind leading! Ah, how otherwise than theirs  
This music that is in me: and yet mine own,  
Mine verily; as theirs may never be  
Personal, wrought of fraught experience  
Of world and man from boyhood upward still  
(Witness our folk-song ever unforgot!)  
In wide-eyed understanding of the moods  
Of men, acceptance of the fact of fate  
And sympathy with cosmic issuings!  
Ah, so; for surely spiritual more

## POEMS OF PERSONALITY

Than instinct is the sage insistence  
Of serious appreciation basing  
The onward step of apprehending soul!  
(Forgive, O Muse, the seeming boastfulness!  
'T is founded in an artist-piety  
And reverent self-subjection as I toil!) —  
The self-control, so, as the labor-pains  
Of fervent parturition wax and wreak  
Their will upon the works of destiny!  
No mad, luxurious plaint at agonies  
(To chaos fusing all resistent lore  
Of logic-distance, cyclic hierarchy!)  
Too poignant nor within their poignancy  
Too sweet; but something spirit-solemnizing  
In large restraint (retaining inferences  
Multiform, order'd to the farthest spheres),  
In large restraint remembering well the wonder  
Of myriad births before in minds and hearts  
Of human melodists triumphantly.  
O blessed sequence in the story aye  
Of every fresh-creative immanence  
Inherent to it as a dignity  
Of self-containment, be they ne'er so new  
These figures of the present utterance!

## BRAHMS

The deep sustainment of the searching-back  
(Though mind fore-reach an own eternity!)  
Unto the uppermost and inwardmost  
Endoming concave of the storehouse-brain,  
The overarching heaven of memories!  
What self-protection in the presence here  
Imaginary of the master-six  
Who shadowy o'er my shoulder lean and write  
If with my pen yet well-nigh warningly  
The sequence-scripture as it ought to be!  
So Beethoven, so Bach and Händel might  
(Nay, Mozart, Haydn or Schumann, as you will!)  
Have juxtaposed such contrapuntal schemes,  
Such themes melodic and such rhythmus-plans  
With such-like harmonies. If that they did not  
(Yea, if they could not, would not strictly thus —  
A sense convinceth, these are mine alone  
Because sincerely of my cultured heart!),  
If that they did not, fairly may it seem  
'T were but men's limitation of life-span,  
Their absolute position there and then  
(Which I, in loving them, well-nigh re-learn!)  
Which could preclude our common faith and form.  
An they had dwelt in the chamber here to-day

## POEMS OF PERSONALITY

Their work had been mine own; or not unlike  
(Were they in youth and vigor) these my tones!  
And they in me are vocal: not myself  
All-unregardful, but, myself well-versed  
And learning-influenced, a self the more  
Motived by such compliance, more myself  
As they by me more musick'd — that a world  
Well-versed in Beethoven's, in Händel's song  
May understand and heartfully receive  
The utterance of the masters from mine hand,  
While generously acclaiming works of me!  
What service thus to keep alive the light  
(Adding to truth though scarce displacing it)  
Of former uttermost achievements, now  
(Where risk might be of practice-desuetude)  
Revivified because of utterance  
Fresh, new-impassion'd and with wisdoms of  
A later world of men's veracity,  
Lest technic (question trivial to the soul  
O' troth) seem stale or scarce sophisticate!  
What service and what privilege of mine  
(And classicism feeds humility!)  
To enter in and take traditional  
The virtue of the earlier music-truth,

## { BRAHMS

The absolute function of the torchbearer,  
Who, for his strong half-century of toil,  
Paceth forever in processional  
Of music's institution! For my heart  
Is Bach, is Beethoven and Händel too,  
Haply if but thereby in verity  
O'er all mine own! And I, in uttering  
The great tradition unto acceptation  
Of scholar-culture, am but vitalwise  
Original, an idiosyncrasy  
Of innermost romanticism instinct  
Because thus native to the truth-control!

Hark, ye! who vainly after gods unknown  
Are widest erring from the strict ascent!  
Hark deep; and search if so, by shutting soul  
From memory's sustainment and the power,  
In terms of absolute tone-experience,  
Sprung of the reverence of self-restraint  
Within the idiom of a music-mood,  
Ye have not emptied from the heaven's concave  
The content of your tone-philosophies;  
And, forcing music as a concept-speech  
To tasks best suited of a sister-art,

## POEMS OF PERSONALITY

Yet welter in your æther as a void:  
A music-void, whate'er your utterance  
Of program and of picture openly?  
Ye, lifting no torch; but (half-articulant  
In terms of absolute music-idiom yet)  
Cut-off as by a bedlam from the world,  
Disabled by the doctrine of your dream:  
All-vision, ay, but nought of firmament  
Unless, through inference of speech and scene,  
A firmament of earth too earthlily.  
And, if ye be unskilful to sustain  
Yourselves of the æther as an Icarus  
And fear that earth-fall from the music-void  
(The antique figure he of such romance  
Which makes a void where art-void none had been!),  
Spurn not what learning stirs, if yet half-womb'd,  
Plume-budding, I swear ye, from the spirit of each  
(In memories of a youth-hour, childhood-years:  
The happy school of folk-song unforgot)  
And reverence — these, for wings which fervors melt  
not;  
That loftily ye wreak, ere life be done,  
The music-destiny as in me now!  
Hark to the reminiscence, echoing

## BRAHMS

The structure of the master, him who built  
In centuries of contrapuntal toil  
An heritage, which, 'neath the winds of fate,  
Yea, as the gathering backward of the wave  
With lifted image of the hills and skies,  
Forward and forward ever bursts beyond!

## NIETZSCHE

IF by their fruits (to quote the hated creed)  
Shall men be known, ah, by what bitter fruit  
Unto the weaker peoples of the earth  
Shall I, the neglected and despised to-day —  
Shall I, in saner hours the mild and kind —  
Shall I be known and my mad name accursed!  
Lo! by what rumors of approaching wars  
Awful, o'erwhelming when the mightier hosts  
Of Teuton like to locusts o'er the earth  
(Our treaties torn and our most solemn oaths  
Forsworn — for what were 'faith toward heretics'?)  
Sweep down and on and over, leaving there  
But fields burnt black and homes in smouldering  
heaps:  
And everywhere the overhuman cult  
(In cross of iron rigor-emblemized)  
Crushing and crucifying; that the maim'd  
And halt and blind alone survive the stroke  
Of latest Hun and Vandal slaughtering them!  
Ha! Where the far-famed temples of their creed?  
Tottering, yea, tower on tower; the fallen naves  
Bloody beneath with crush'd-out brains of men,

## NIETZSCHE

Of women and of children whom a dogma  
Senile and tottering drove in idol-hope  
To prayer; and whom mine hope-of-overman  
Hath stew'd and charnell'd on the altar-floor. —  
Great wrath of glorious Germans! once aroused,  
Mine ultimate aristocrats of earth  
(How I mistook ye in the earlier days!),  
To absolute ruthlessness: how shall the shrieks  
Of Belgian (shook from superstition's trance),  
Of Gaul (no Emperor to urge them now,  
Nor culture comparable to our own!),  
Of Gaul and Briton wild with streaming hair  
Howl to their helpless heaven's all-vacantness:  
Their heavens empty; and no power to save  
Equal at all to man's, to overman  
His power to dismay and doom the world! :

Muscle and sinew, steel and my fierce hate  
Which fills the heavens of Frank and Angle, ay,  
Low-spirited curs of quack democracy,  
With soaring shells and shower of molten death,  
With flare and thunder and the nations' end!  
Not one shall live to tell the fearful tale  
Where tongues from the roots are torn; not one awake

## POEMS OF PERSONALITY

To flash the accusing eye, where eyes are ripp'd  
From socket; not one hand remain to write  
The desolate condemnation: for their hands  
Are flung in the reeking ditch and only stumps  
Of anguish'd arms implore where peace is none!  
So shall they wreak who take of me the truth;  
So shall they slay: because am I divine!  
If 'by our fruits': these are the fruits of me!

What sayest thou, Christ? Have I not crown'd thee  
now

With sharper than the thorns of ancientry?  
Yea, how I scorn the silly sacrifice,  
The brutish sufferance of the underman,  
The underdog in the world whereof wert thou  
The crucified arch-type: imposed at last  
On hated strangers; but from German hearts  
(As in arch-type mine own) now blotted out  
In triumph of a fitness to survive  
Beyond all good and ill, all counter-rights  
Of any than the chosen ego-few —  
Thy stupid pitifulness, Christ, crush'd down  
And trampled in the blooded, ashen mud  
Never to lift again out of the grave!

## NIETZSCHE

Ah! well-nigh with the froth of some wild-beast  
At ravening rape upon the body of earth  
I rant; and curse, O Jew, the Cross and thee! —

Nay, lift not, Jew! that darkening scowl at mine!  
Nay, strike not with that sudden, angry arm,  
Of recent centuries, unused and weak!  
Art thou, too, cured of love; and with wan hate  
A spectre stalking from the sepulchre  
By soaking wounds of men revived and hurl'd  
(Thou wast not always otherwise than I!)  
Worldward anew, a spirit of ruthlessness?  
Art thou, then, arm'd against me, to strike down  
(In irony I mock thine impotence!)  
The hand of my defence and hew it off  
The reeking stump which powerless hangs apart  
(In sport I picture it to frenzy thee)  
A dripping spectacle? And wouldest thou take  
My tongue and tear it? Wouldest thou pluck mine eyes  
Green from their nerve-roots? Nay, be merciful,  
Have pity, I implore thee mockingwise!  
Yet someway I would see thee as thou hast been  
(Yea, mainly, and when of heresies unplagued)  
Not as in this delirium teasingly

## POEMS OF PERSONALITY

I take thee for an Anti-Christ! For thou  
Wast my great spoil and conquest, yielding me  
An universe wherethrough mine egohood  
(Thine, too, could persecute: ay, that I yield thee!)  
Savage and splendid might achieve her end.  
And if thou, too, enlarging on the old,  
Cruel hint that comes to competence in me;  
Yea, if thou, too, shouldst prove an over-hand,  
An over-sword to smite and torch to burn,  
Where, Lord, for thee or me alike would lie  
A world to spurn and desolate? I prithee,  
Down, down into the grave again and rot,  
Peaceful beneath the sod blood-saturate;  
And leave this world to super-savagery  
Set-off and gloried by thy crown of thorn!  
I crave thee, Lord! — Nay, nay, I know the cant:  
How Gottlieb Fichte, rousing us to war,  
Yet dream'd unto our Christianity  
An human oversoul, self-unity  
The same in each and every man of earth  
(As though our sun-space were as cramp'd as thine)  
And held us back thereby from license (ha!  
No Gottlieb staid the conquest latterly —  
Strange, strange, I could have wished it less entire! —

## NIETZSCHE

Along our Rhine and after great Sedan!);  
Who held us back in altruism whilst then  $\backslash$   
Our tribe gain'd freedom from the despot Gaul!  
I know how now my cult of superman  
In hearts too tender toward hypocrisy  
Allows to each and every man of earth  
The potency of private super-will  
And therefore fain were Christian in respect  
For every high ambition as mine own,  
To spare the weaker peoples from dismay:  
Thy cant of 'neighbor even as thyself'!  
But I, O Jew, prefer and choose the test  
(Now that the Vision breaks the Reason down!),  
The truth, of independence; in my power  
Of absolute purpose with the right of might,  
The might beyond stale question ethical,  
To combat; yea, O Lord (though even thou,  
Forced by my fight to curse thy cant's-own creed,  
Rise up in arms and hew my body down —  
Indeed, indeed, thy strength grows wonder-keen!),  
To struggle and oppose and hate and hew  
The body of my neighbor, whilst mine own  
I fearlessly expose to the flaming sword —  
A mutual dependence of the strife

## POEMS OF PERSONALITY

In both alike if still the cant thou cravest:  
Believing in the combat, not in peace  
Save by oppression and the crushing down! —  
Thou wilt not back to the grave? Thou wilt not  
down?

Come, then, strike hard, thou Christ! and let me see,  
Whate'er the issue, my creed conquering:  
Not thine, by any possibility;  
A world unchristianized in meeting so  
Arbitrament of war, of stroke to stroke  
Determining survival — ah, no more  
World-love hypocrisies but, by thy force,  
My victory! Though the Fatherland should fall  
And I, the neglected and despised of eld,  
I, yea, be trampled 'neath thy cloven heel,  
Thy nature stands corrupted by mine own!  
Thy nature stands ennobled by mine own!  
Ay, though I die, I leave thee in the deed  
An Anti-Christ, mine image: ruthlessly! —

If 'by their fruits': this last and best is fruit;  
That Christ must meet me in the over-doom!  
And so, how nobly mine and mine alone  
The militant high compulsion! Mine the name

## NIETZSCHE

Dread with the rumor of approaching wars  
Awful, o'er-whelming; mine the ruin-ash  
Choked up with charnell'd corpses and the arms  
Upear'd in the dripping ditch where peace is none!  
Mine, mine the glory: glorious, ruthlessly!

## ROYCE

THE duty of a loyalty to truth  
Compels that truth be spoken, whatsoe'er  
The function of a civic violence  
(Our nation, ceasing parley with the foes  
Of man, thrice-arm'd against a pirate crew)  
Must utterance provoke! For violently  
Have falsehood and dishonor long laid hold  
With horrible outrage on the stricken land  
Which, calm and unoffending in the sun,  
Barr'd but the barbarous path of savagery  
From plotted spoliations: that, itself  
Made victim to the fangs of the foil'd beast,  
A Belgium bleeds. The appointed guardian turns  
To desolator; and the ravishment,  
All-unprevented though the half-world fight,  
Persists in still-increasing agony;  
Whilst we unmoved, unmoving stand apart  
And with a scared, sleek courtesy disclaim  
Occasion for a judgment: right or wrong,  
Scarce for a neutral wisdom to pronounce!  
O coward heart! O curst disloyalty  
To our firm freedom of an upright past;

## ROYCE

Lost honor-ideal of democracy;  
Neglected faith of a people heretofore  
Fair to the weak, downtrodden, fearing nought  
Of overbearingness and tyrant-power!  
O hated policy, which ties the tongue  
And folds the hands with futile prayer for peace:  
When, of all human chronicle, the worst  
Outrage upon the holy spirit of man  
(Fiendly prepared and fiendly screen'd by lies)  
Now wantons, riots without let or check  
To-day, to-morrow at our ocean-door  
And all-precludes peace' possibility  
(For us, as for our fathers otherwhile)  
Unless within us be the conscience dead,  
The spirit sodden, rotted to the core!

My friends, here gather'd together to attest  
Your detestation of the Teuton crime!—  
My friends, there is a progress of the spirit,  
A process wherein the soul achieves herself  
In virtue of a loved community  
With other-souls of mutual respect;  
An involution of the conscience-care  
(Not for the narrower aims of merely me!)

## POEMS OF PERSONALITY

Toward ever more and more the whole wide world  
Of human hopes, of human purposes  
Appreciated to fulfilment through  
The consummations of a social good  
Contributed in every deed and dream,  
Each thought and striving of the least of us.  
And we, the least of us, wax holiest  
Best by the world-inclusion, the concluding  
Of every evil in the cosmic course  
Consciously toward a bettering — not, by blinding  
The eyes of the heart, the ears and tongue tight-  
sealing  
Where uttermost appeal claims of the soul!  
And we must choose the part of heedless sleep,  
Else of the high and strenuous works of love!  
Today, tomorrow is the call of love:  
Not as in sanctimonious lethargy  
Of waiting a millennium but, by dint  
Of love's best blow, to bear the brutal down,  
To fight the good fight where the fight hath join'd  
Before our feet with horrid spectacle  
Of nations ravish'd and the spoiler strong!  
The spoiler: heeds he the precluded hopes  
(Harmless and high in homely dignity)

## ROYCE

Of them he sacrifices, stands he forth  
With the cosmic onmarch of expanding insight,  
The world-redeeming spirit? Or must the fiend,  
Even for the glory of the greater peace,  
Be beaten down and caged and tamed; to learn  
The meaning of the earth-motive? — Oh, we stand  
Now at the parting of the nation's ways:  
The peace supine, the plausible partnership  
In the huge injustice mask'd with guise of a mind  
Open and judgment poised to wise suspense  
(So rectifying nothing, opening so  
Nought of a nobler future!); or at last  
With burst of awful, pent-up sympathies  
The mighty voice, the arm yet young to prove  
By militant consecration wrong-compell'd  
The strength of a right cause — America  
Recorded in resistance: that, perchance  
(All parley with the perjured being cut-off)  
At any sacrifice of common ease,  
At any cost in holy violence,  
Truth-faith and honor and the loyalty  
Which saveth with a savor shall not pass!





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